CHINA

AND THE PRESENT CRISIS

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AND

THE PRESENT CRISIS

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CHINA

AND

THE PRESENT CRISIS

WITH NOTES ON A VISIT TO JAPAN AND KOREA

BY

JOSEPH WALTON, M.P.

WITH A MAP OF CHINA

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PREFACE

THE eyes of the whole civilised world are now turned towards China, where it appears only too certain that one of the most terrible tragedies which history has ever recorded has just taken place.

I spent some eight months recently in travel through China, Japan, and Korea, with the special object of ascertaining from the best informed men on the spot what the political and commercial situation really was.

I visited most of the centres of political interest and of commercial activity, and also journeyed over 5,000 miles in the interior of China. This is my only justification for venturing to issue this book, which is without literary pretensions. It simply contains a brief account of my journey and some of the information I gathered, which may possibly be of interest in view of the present acute crisis in the Far East. I have introduced on pp. 224–48 the statement I made in Parliament on the 30th of March last, which reviewed the situation as it then appeared to me, and I have added a short chapter

dealing with subsequent events and the necessity for the re-assertion of our rightful position alongside other nations in the affairs of China. No one can over-estimate the importance of the British Government pursuing a firm and definite policy with resolution and vigour at this juncture. A wise and just settlement in South Africa is important; but I venture to say that it is of tenfold greater importance to the commercial interests of the British Empire that our Government should at the end of hostilities in China insist in concert with other Powers on the setting up of a stable and enlightened Government, so that China may be preserved for the Chinese and the whole Empire remain open equally to the trade of all nations.

JOSEPH WALTON.

July 24, 1900.

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CHINA AND THE PRESENT CRISIS

CHAPTER I

A VISIT TO NEWCHWANG

Owing to the engrossing nature of the situation in China, I have decided to begin with my arrival in that country in August 1899, and to place at the end the notes on my visit to Japan and Korea.

WEI-HAI-WEI

The first port of call in China was Chefoo, and the passage from Chemulpo occupied twenty-six hours. Early in the morning, standing in pretty close to the shore, we sighted Wei-hai-Wei. I had an excellent view of the eastern entrance, which is three miles across, and too shallow for men-of-war to enter. We also passed the western inlet, which is a narrow, deep-water entrance. On a mountainous island between these two entrances the naval station is situated, and a site has been selected which will be invisible from the sea, and have a natural and complete protection against bombardment from outside. H.M.S. 'Powerful' was lying at anchor. I

examined the chart, and found that over the greater portion of Wei-hai-Wei Bay the water is only three or three and a half fathoms. The deep-water anchorage appears to be limited in extent, and unfortunately it is not protected from the fire of an enemy by the island, but lies directly opposite the deep-water entrance. The Chinese had fortifications on the shore, but these, I understand, the British are disregarding. There is a range of high bare hills at the back of Wei-hai-Wei, and practically no timber, and a very sparse population along the coast. I was told by a man likely to be well informed that the Japanese really effected the capture of Port Arthur by bribery, and that they had even offered a sum of money to Admiral Ting, the Chinese commander at Wei-hai-Wei, if he would hand over that place to them. This Ting indignantly refused, and fought to the death at the head of his blue-jackets; the Chinese soldiers fled.

I was informed that from time to time the range of the tide varies very much at Wei-hai-Wei. Not long ago it was so low, even in the deep-water portion of the harbour, that all the vessels were aground, including, of course, the men-of-war.

CHEFOO

As we approached Chefoo, in brilliant sunshine, it looked quite an attractive place, and, as seen from the sea, large houses, built of brick or stone, seemed to predominate, in marked contrast to the Korean towns recently visited.

The European settlement is on a fairly well timbered bluff, immediately over the sea. Fortunately, the English Consul, Mr. Sundyus, came on board expecting to meet Dr. Morrison, the *Times* correspondent, from Pekin, who, however, had not come by our steamer. I was taken ashore by him, and went up to the Consulate for tiffin. On the way I ascertained that one of the Butterfield & Swire's steamers would start at two o'clock for Newchwang direct, and though it was then 12.45, I arranged passages, sent my Chinese boy to transfer the baggage from one steamer to the other, and left by the 'Tamsui' for Newchwang.

VOYAGE TO NEWCHWANG

The 'Tamsui' is an English ship, and I much appreciated the absence of smells when we went on board. She is really a cargo steamer, with little accommodation for passengers, but we were made most comfortable, the captain and officers doing everything in their power to give us a pleasant time. The food was wholesome and excellent, and to know how to appreciate this it was only necessary to have been for more than a week on board the Japanese steamer 'Higo-Maru.' During the first part of the trip the sea was like glass; the moon rose in a clear sky, and it was simply delightful on the bridge as we glided northwards past the headland four miles outside of Port Arthur, on which there is a revolving light. Early in the morning there was a thunderstorm and a heavy downpour of rain. There were nearly

200 Chinese passengers lying about on deck, and I was sorry for the poor fellows as the torrent of rain drove them to find shelter in some stuffy region below. They exhibited considerable curiosity in regard to the European passengers, filing past the small cabin and gazing in on us with an expression of interest on their faces. The majority of them were on their way to the railway construction works near Newchwang. They paid only 2*s.* per head for the passage, a distance of 210 miles, and out of this they were fed. Living, however, as they do, mainly upon rice, the cost of a day's food was not more than 4½*d.*

Shortly before we reached the Newchwang Bar a violent summer squall accompanied by thunder overtook us, followed by a storm of hailstones, which when picked up off the deck were solid pieces of ice, some of them nearly an inch in diameter and more than half an inch in thickness. We had a bad half-hour, and the steamer had to lie-to, but the storm then passed off.

We took a pilot on board and entered the river leading up to Newchwang, which is some fifteen miles from its mouth. The river is very winding, and has flat marshy land on both sides. As we approached Newchwang the shores were lined by thousands of junks and barges. The junks trade a long distance, going even as far south as Shanghai and Hong Kong. The barges bring bean-cake, bean-oil, and beans or peas (of which there is an enormous production in Manchuria) down from the interior, and

then moor in the river and watch the course of the market. What they bring is sold by auction, and the market fluctuates from day to day; when they think a good opportunity has arrived they dispose of their cargo. The steamer we came by would take back about a two-thirds cargo of these products, this being as much as she could carry to cross the bar with safety. There were many steamers lying in the river, chiefly owned by the firms of Butterfield & Swire, Jardine, Matheson, & Co., and the China Trading Company; also a number of Japanese steamers.

On the port side from the bridge there was a capital view of the construction works of the Newchwang Extension Line, which has been such a bone of contention as regards the terms upon which British money was to be advanced for its construction. There is a wharf at which the contractors will unload their railway material close to the site of the terminus.

BRITISH AND RUSSIAN RAILWAY TERMINI

A more or less indefinite arrangement has been made for a further concession of land to the British on the river bank at a point where it is nothing but a malarial swamp. Both this and the railway terminus are on the wrong side of the river—viz. the opposite side to the town of Newchwang, which is an obvious disadvantage. On the other hand the Russian railway terminus is on the same side of the river as the town, and has at its back the rich country of Manchuria from which to draw its traffic when the railway is completed. The river being navigable for

200 miles up into the interior, a certain proportion of produce will, no doubt, continue to come down by water, and of that the Newchwang Extension Line may secure a fair share. But I fear that the extensive system of railways which Russia is building through Manchuria will, in the near future, secure for her the bulk of its trade.

NEWCHWANG

Newchwang is the only treaty port of the Chinese province of Manchuria, extending over 390,000 square miles, with an excellent climate, fertile soil, great forests, and mineral wealth. Russia is rapidly placing herself in military occupation of this great country. She has seized Port Arthur and Ta-lien-Wan, and is making the former impregnable. She has now about 40,000 soldiers in these places, the laying down of a system of railways throughout the country is rapidly proceeding, and at every railway station Russian soldiers are to be found. It was therefore with great interest that I paid this flying visit to Manchuria, to ascertain as far as I could how matters really stood.

On landing, I called upon the British Consul, Mr. Hosie. Dr. Daly, the English medical man here, put me up, and I received a most hearty welcome.

TRIP UP THE RUSSIAN RAILWAY FROM NEWCHWANG

Armed with a letter of introduction from our Consul, Mr. Hosie, I called upon Mr. Titoff, engineer

for the Russian railway from Newchwang northwards. I was indebted also to the Russian Consul for assistance in bringing us together. The Russian railway terminus is at Nui-chia-tun, above the town of Newchwang. Mr. Titoff undertook to arrange to have me conveyed up from that place to Ta-shih-chao —the junction of the Newchwang branch with the Russian Main Manchurian Railway fourteen miles distant. Captain McSwiney, who speaks Russian perfectly, accompanied me. The roads, owing to the heavy rains, were almost impassable, and though the tide was against us (and when receding, the river runs at the rate of seven knots an hour), we decided to go up the river to the railway. Mr. Bowra, Commissioner of Customs, most kindly placed at our disposal a Customs House boat manned by five stalwart Chinamen. It took them an hour and a quarter of hard pulling to get us up the three miles. It was somewhat difficult to land, as the bank of the river rose sheer up for several feet; but we managed it by climbing up an apology for a wharf at which railway material is discharged, and found ourselves in the midst of a scene of great activity. Hundreds of men were at work putting together Baldwin locomotives, of which seventy-eight are coming here and seventy-one going to Vladivostock. They were also building wagons and carriages. The wheels and axles and other steel and iron parts are sent from America and Russia, also the main timber frames ready prepared; these are put together, and the other woodwork is done at the railway terminus, in a number of long

sheds roughly constructed of timber, some of which are covered with corrugated-iron roofing. We found our way to Mr. Titoff's house close by the terminus, and he gave us a real Russian welcome. He made many apologies for being able to provide only tinned meats, as his cook had died of bubonic plague two days before, and as a precautionary measure he had immediately burnt to the ground the kitchen and adjoining rooms in which his servants lived.

RUSSIAN HOSPITALITY

We were offered vodka, Crimean claret, champagne *ad lib.*, beer and aërated drinks, also an unlimited quantity of tea, which was served in huge glasses with sugar but no milk, a little claret being substituted for milk by the Russians. We had excellent chicken soup, tinned Russian sturgeon, salmon, chicken, woodcock, and black-cock. Several other Russians, including a doctor, a captain of engineers, Mr. Titoff's assistant engineer, the traffic manager, and a lady, were of the party. The tiffin was served under an awning in front of Mr. Titoff's house, and lasted three hours. We drank the health of the Queen with musical honours—a large musical box striking up 'God save the Queen' at the right moment. Then I proposed the health of the Czar, and afterwards we drank each other's health, vowing eternal friendship. It was indeed a curious position to be in, surrounded by these most hospitable Russians. Mr. Titoff told Captain McSwiney that he was aware I was one

of their opponents in the English Parliament, but that political differences ought not to be allowed to prevent private friendships. He spoke in warm terms of Lord Charles Beresford, stating that his eyes were like two lanterns, but he said that 'Charlie' had made him angry, and was a naughty boy for having stated at Shanghai, after his visit, that Newchwang and its hinterland were full of Russian soldiers. He explained that he had taken immense trouble to collect 150 men (railway guards) from a wide area in order to receive the English Admiral with fitting honours, and that this number was only made up by adding a batch of Cossacks who happened to be passing through on their way to Port Arthur. I merely give the statement as it was made, and express no opinion as to its correctness or otherwise.

After tiffin he took me upstairs to have a wash, and before I knew what he was up to had poured a bottle of scent over my head to refresh me, which, however, running down into my eyes, hardly added to my comfort for the next half-hour. He also added two kinds of scent to the water in which I was to wash, and insisted on my accepting another bottle as a present. I never met a man in all my life who seemed to be so fond of scent. He had a dozen different sorts in his bedroom, and yet he is a very big man, of splendid physique, with certainly nothing effeminate about him.

Mr. Titoff abused the Chinese in unmeasured terms, and treated all his servants roughly, with the exception of one or two, to whom he was just as

kind as he was rude to the rest; but if his bearing and conduct towards them is a sample of the way in which the Russians treat the Chinese, there will certainly be no love lost between them. It is only fair to say, on the other hand, that he is a most generous man. He has 30,000 acres of land in Russia, and an income of 100,000 roubles, which he gives away right and left. He explained to me that he had been here two and a half years, that it was all work, eat, and sleep, a life without repose or society, and that it had taken six years out of his life. There was no necessity for him to be here at all, but he was doing the work for the sake of his country. He made the servant bring to the tiffin-table a large portrait of his sister—a lovely girl—who, he said, was all he had in the world to care for.

EXPEDITION UP THE RUSSIAN RAILWAY

We were taken up the railway by an engine with a flat truck attached, on which chairs were placed. Tea, claret, champagne, aërated waters, also cigars and cigarettes, were taken with us and offered constantly.

The gauge of the railway is that of Russia—viz. 5 feet—whilst the Newchwang Extension Line, built by British capital, is 4 ft. 8½ in. The rails are only spiked to the sleepers at present, and the line is not yet ballasted. Deep ditches have been cut on either side of the line right across the flat rich alluvial plain which stretches fifteen miles from the river to Ta-shih-chao at the foot of a range

of bare green hills running north-west and south-east as far as the eye can reach. The Main Manchurian Line runs at the foot of these hills northwards to Mukden and southwards to Port Arthur. It is said to be completed eighty miles both ways, and it certainly was so from my own personal observation for some miles from the junction.

The line over which we travelled was in good condition, considering the nature of the foundation, the heavy rains that had recently fallen, and the rapidity with which the work has been executed. The railway was only begun in April of last year. The huge plain which stretched from the river to the hills was covered with splendid crops of millet and beans. The Chinese villages of mud houses with flat roofs are much less picturesque than those of Japan and Korea.

TA-SHIH-CHAO

At Ta-shih-chao were several soldiers of remarkably fine physique, whom the Russians term railway guards. The stalwart station-master was also evidently a soldier. I took snapshots of them with my kodak, also of groups of Chinese and of the surrounding country.

Outside the station the officials were busily engaged in sprinkling liquid disinfectants. Bedding was being brought out of three houses close by the railway station, and was burnt within a few yards of us while we were there, people having died of plague

in the houses. We were told that many deaths from plague have recently occurred all round the district. Some of the Russians were terribly afraid, and eight or ten who could break away from their engagements in connection with the railway crowded round Mr. Titoff, seeking his consent to return instantly to Russia. He brought them back with him in the train, and discussed matters with each one personally on the way. By the time we reached Newchwang I think he had overcome the fears of some of them—at any rate for the time being.

At the railway junction tea was again served, and scores of flies hung around one's glass. I shirked drinking the tea, having some doubt as to the purity of the water at that plague-stricken spot.

On our return to Mr. Titoff's house we found our Chinese boatmen waiting for us. To get on board we had to slide down an almost perpendicular slope into the boat, as there was no landing-place whatever in the neighbourhood. This was accomplished without mishap, except the loss of Captain McSwiney's helmet, which went floating down the river. The tide being in our favour, the boatmen brought us down at a swinging pace.

On my return I met Mr. Sprent, the clergyman here, at dinner. He is a man of splendid physique and active habits, and has travelled all through Manchuria in Chinese dress. He was arrested on the north of the Amur River by the Russians, and, though he was armed with everything that was

requisite in the shape of passports, was transported back across the river into Chinese territory.

INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES

There are several disputes at Newchwang between English merchants, the Russians, and the Chinese Government; one being the question of some land adjoining the railway terminus, which has been occupied by the Russians without saying 'By your leave,' and on which Messrs. Bush had advanced money on mortgage. There are two other cases in which mining rights have been bought from holders of Dragon papers by British subjects who have been refused the necessary ratification by the Chinese officials at Mukden, on the ground that they have not complied with the terms and conditions imposed by the Mining Regulations issued in 1898. Having granted mining concessions to Russia, France, and Germany on more favourable conditions than those contained in the Mining Regulations, the Chinese Government have denied to British subjects 'all privileges, immunities, and advantages' which have been granted to the subjects or governments of other nations, as provided for in the Treaty of Tientsin. H.M. Consul at Newchwang did not deny that he had received instructions from the Minister at Pekin not to assist the merchants of Newchwang in securing what they and I regard as their just rights. Yet it is a fact that it has been over and over again stated in Parliament by her Majesty's Government that they would give all possible assistance in all cases

where British subjects were making a *bonâ-fide* application for commercial concessions in China. Another quibble on the part of the Chinese officials in regard to these particular matters is that the new Mining Regulations stipulate that no concession shall be granted to a foreigner, but only to Chinese who may introduce foreign capital, or seek the co-operation of foreigners, with official sanction. They do this entirely disregarding the fact that they have given mining concessions direct to Russians, French, and Germans.

ADDITIONAL BRITISH AND RUSSIAN CONCESSIONS

I also discussed with Mr. Hosie the question of the additional British concession which is being negotiated for on the same side of the river as the Newchwang Extension Line terminus. The tract of land which has been applied for extends from the river bank across a neck to the bank of the river again, as it makes a sweeping curve behind the railway terminus. This negotiation has been dragging on almost interminably, and unless we adopt firmer methods of dealing with the Chinese Government rapid progress will not be made.

The Russians are also demanding a further concession of land on the bank of the river opposite their present terminus. They contemplate bridging the river to put themselves in a position to link up their Manchurian Railway system with the Newchwang Extension Line, and thus have continuous railway communication with Pekin. This explains

the determination with which they resisted the obtaining of any control whatever over the Newchwang Extension Line by the British capitalists who are finding the money for its construction. It is reported that the Russians are already buying up these railway bonds in the London market, and before many years are over it is possible that they will be in possession of the railway right down to Pekin, as the English bondholders can be paid off at any time by three months' notice at 20 per cent. premium.

INTERVIEW WITH THE RESIDENT ENGINEER

Mr. Wright, the resident engineer for the section at this end of the Newchwang Extension Line, came to breakfast one morning in order to give me an opportunity for a little conversation. He stated that they expected to get the whole of their rails and other material delivered by the end of September 1899. They hoped to have engines with construction trains running over the railway from Newchwang to Shan-hai-kwan by March 1900. They have ordered Baldwin engines from America, partly because they are cheaper than English engines, but mainly owing to English makers being unable to undertake to execute the orders in less than two years.

A considerable quantity of rails, machinery, and other materials are being supplied from England and Scotland. A ship was expected daily, when I was there, with 15,000 casks of German cement.

Chang-yi, the new Chinese official appointed as the head of this railway – which, though it is being

built with British money by British engineers, is a Chinese Government railway—is still giving the chief engineer, Mr. Kinder, very great trouble. He is anxious that the line should be sold to Russia. The Russians are causing considerable difficulty by sending men down to try and tempt away foremen and skilled workmen both from Shanghai workshops and dockyards, and from the construction works of the Newchwang Extension Line. They promise an enormous increase in wages, which they pay for a few weeks and then discontinue, with the result that the men are very discontented and are coming back to English employment. As in the case of the Russian Manchurian Railway, the carriages and wagons are being built out here, engine repairing and erecting and carriage-building works having been established at Tong-Shan. The wheels and axles and other fittings are got from England, while the woodwork is made on the spot.

NEWCHWANG TRADE

The trade of Newchwang is growing: the total value of imports and exports in 1898 was 4,634,474*l.*, as compared with 3,926,344*l.* in 1897.

The total tonnage of shipping cleared inwards and outwards in 1898 was 827,777 tons, compared with 730,967 tons in 1897.

English shipping was 309,612 tons, as against the Russian 3,452 tons and the French *nil* in 1898. The United States of America had only 4,894 tons.

The most remarkable feature is the enormous

strides made by the shipping trade of Japan. In 1897 the total tonnage of their vessels in and out of Newchwang was 86,000, while in 1898 it amounted to 202,000.

The main exports from Newchwang are bean-cake, peas, and beans. The bean-cake is used as a manure, and is principally exported to Swatow and Kwang-tung, and also to Japan.

The duties levied by the Chinese Maritime Customs apply only to foreign shipping, and in addition there is an enormous trade done in native junks between Newchwang, Korea, and the minor coast ports of China, which are not included in the trade statistics. Mr. Bowra drew my attention to the hindrance to trade which is involved in the Chinese regulation prohibiting the export of foodstuffs. This gives rise to no end of bribing of native officials on the part of agriculturists and merchants in order that they may look the other way when a cargo of grain is being loaded for export. No less than 85,000*l.* worth of millet and other grain was smuggled last year out of the ports of Newchwang and Chefoo for Korea. The free export of grain and other produce all over China would stimulate trade enormously.

The trade of Newchwang will show a considerable increase this year (1899) over last year, and when the railway system of Manchuria and also the Newchwang Extension Lines have been completed, the trade of this port ought to advance by leaps and bounds, provided it has fair play. The demand on the part of Lord Salisbury for the insertion of a

stipulation which would have secured that the goods of British traders shall be carried over the railways constructed in Manchuria by the Russians on the same terms as the goods of Russia or of any other nation was not conceded. It remains to be seen, therefore, whether the Russians will, by the imposition of differential rates, strangle the great trade which British merchants are doing with Manchuria through the treaty port of Newchwang.

Having regard to the fact that British trade here amounts to 3,000,000*l.* sterling a year, and that it is the last foothold that the Russians have left us in Manchuria, it seems extraordinary that no British gunboat is stationed at Newchwang. The other day, when word was brought to Mr. Hosie, the Consul, that a serious assault had been committed in the native town upon a European, he actually asked the Russians to lend him Cossacks to go down and rescue the man. This is a practical acquiescence in Russia's policing Newchwang, and simply suicidal as far as British interests are concerned.

CHINESE IMPERIAL CUSTOMS REVENUE

The revenue for 1898 for the whole of China was 22,503,397 taels, which shows a diminution, but this has arisen on two articles only, opium and tea; there having been a decrease of nearly 4,000,000 taels in 'likin' on foreign opium and 700,000 taels on tea. The falling-off in revenue on opium is not due to the fact that a less quantity is consumed, but is owing to the increased quantity grown in Manchuria. A high

duty is levied on opium—viz. 110 taels (30 taels duty and 80 taels likin) per picul containing $133\frac{1}{3}$ lb., and worth in the market 700 to 800 dollars. The export duty on tea is 2 taels 5 cents a picul; in addition to this, likin charges are also levied upon tea. The imposition of this is said to have seriously injured the China tea trade. However, apart from the opium and tea revenue, there has been a substantial increase in the trade done in other dutiable articles.

All duties are paid in the Hai-Kwan tael, which was taken at 2*s.* 10$\frac{3}{4}$*d.* in making up the figures for 1898. This was originally a lump of pure silver weighing one ounce, but by custom it varies in weight all over China. Roughly speaking, it is equal to one and a third Mexican dollars.

TIFFIN WITH CHINAMEN

One day Dr. Daly invited Mr. Chen-Yu-Ting, a Chinese merchant here, and a Mr. Tong, the secretary of the Newchwang Extension Railway, to tiffin. The former gentleman gave me his views on the present political situation in China. He considers that China may be at any moment on the eve of a great crisis. He described the present Empress Dowager as having 'tucked the young Emperor under her arm and won't allow him to move.' She is now sixty-five years of age and broken in health through being worried with the cares and intrigues necessary to maintain her position. He would not be surprised to hear of her death at any time. When this takes place there will probably be three factions striving

for mastery in China. One will be under Jung-Lu, the generalissimo of all the forces in North China and nephew of the Empress Dowager, who is against reform and is anti-foreign. Another faction might be headed by Kang-Yi, a member of the Grand Council; he and Jung-Lu together broke down the Reform party, but he will play for his own hand if an opportunity arises. The third faction would probably be under the leadership of Prince Ching, now President of the Tsung-li-Yamen; he is a collateral relation of the present Emperor, and is to a certain extent patriotic and in favour of reform. These are all Manchus, and there would still have to be taken into consideration the Cantonese, amongst whom are to be found the majority of the reformers of China, and who might obtain the support of the Chinese generally in a united effort to deprive the Manchus of the governing power in China.

The difficulties in the way of a union of forces are the distinctive local characteristics and prejudices in each province. Each province pays and controls its own army, and the weakness of China in the war with Japan was to a considerable extent due to the fact that the different armies and the different sections of the navy did not work together. I asked the question as to whether there was any improvement in the organisation and equipment of any provincial armies since the war of 1894–5, and was told that though the antiquated gun known as a 'jingall' is in use in some parts, yet

armies like those of Chang-Chih-Tung and of Liu-Kun-Yi (Viceroy of Nanking) have modern rifles.

Chen-Yu-Ting thinks that when the inevitable struggle takes place among the different sections of the Chinese, Russia will take advantage of the crisis, and, advancing south of the Great Wall, will seize as much of China as possible. She would first occupy Chihli, Shensi, Kansuh, and then Shansi and Honan. At the same time he believes that the French would advance from the south and endeavour to occupy a large portion of Southern China, and, if possible, penetrate far enough northwards to enable them to join hands with Russia.

He said that Young China contains many men who are true patriots, holding enlightened views, but states that in view of the fact that for 2,000 years all Emperors have repressed the people, it is no wonder that they lack those qualities of self-reliance, courage, and patriotism, the want of which leaves them so absolutely at the mercy of any strong Power to-day. He considers that the only hope for China is to have its army reorganised under British officers, and he does not believe that the educated Chinese on the coast of China would object to have the assistance of Japanese officers also. He reminded me of the recent notice given by M. de Giers to the Tsung-li-Yamen, warning them that any alliance between China and Japan would be an unfriendly act, and would be followed by serious consequences. He said that the present officials at Pekin are for the most

part in Russian pay, having, it is generally believed, been bought by Russian gold. He added that Russia knows that both in climate and agriculturally China is much superior to Siberia, and that it is not surprising that she should endeavour to gain possession of as much of it as possible. He urged that the English ought to give greater facilities for the naturalisation of Chinese at Singapore and Hong-Kong, and that they ought also to follow the example of the French Consuls at Bankok and Saigon, and instruct British Consuls to naturalise all Chinese or other applicants at every treaty port throughout China. He said that if any inhabitant of India comes to China he enjoys British protection as a British subject, but if a Hong-Kong or Singapore Chinese resident comes to China he does not have this protection unless he has fulfilled the conditions at present so difficult to comply with, and become a naturalised British subject. He drew attention to a condition imposed before naturalisation can take place—viz. the cutting off of the pigtail and the adoption of European dress—and contended that this ought not to be insisted upon.

He stated that the French in Annam extend the privileges of naturalisation to all applicants. His opinion is that Russia has placed herself so rapidly in military occupation of North China that England would in all probability not have time to finish the construction of a railway from British Burmah to the upper Yang-tsze before the crisis, and that, therefore, her true policy, if she is not to be squeezed out

of China altogether, lies in giving every assistance to the creation and reorganisation of a powerful Chinese army—thus helping the Chinese to help themselves.

I give the views thus expressed by an intelligent Chinese merchant as nearly as possible as he stated them to me, and I think they show how comprehensive a grasp of the situation some, at any rate, of the Chinese are able to take.

MISSIONS IN MANCHURIA

The Irish Presbyterians and the Presbyterian Church of Scotland have together ten centres where European missionaries work, and the Danish European Lutheran Church has four centres. They have altogether about 10,000 converts.

There are thirty European Protestant missionaries on the ground, and of these ten are medical. There are also ten lady missionaries and 140 native preachers. They have day schools, with 1,000 scholars, and between twenty and thirty Sunday schools.

They own very valuable property in the shape of hospitals, chapels, schools, and residences, and their work is carried on at a cost of 15,000*l.* a year.

The French Roman Catholic missions are still more extensive. They have many churches throughout Manchuria, also schools, orphanages, and landed property, with two bishops and quite a number of priests. They claim about 50,000 converts.

If Russia annexes Manchuria, and adopts the same policy there that prevails in Russia, missionary

enterprises, which have been built up at so great a cost, and with such beneficial results, will in all probability be extinguished.

Dr. Daly, my host, is a Chinese mandarin, having received the Double Dragon Decoration from the Emperor for Red Cross services at Newchwang during the Chino-Japanese war.

ADVANTAGES OF MANCHURIA

Manchuria is emphatically the white man's climate in China, the thermometer in summer rarely rising above 87° in the shade, while in the winter it sometimes goes down to 17° below zero, but as it is a dry cold it is not severely felt. There are residents here who have been out twenty-five years continuously, and who are perfect examples of health and strength. The physique of the Chinese inhabitants is simply splendid. These facts show the folly of the British Government in having failed to maintain British treaty rights in Manchuria.

I was sorry to hear before I left that the bubonic plague was spreading rapidly, and that many deaths were taking place daily. The plague was of a very virulent type, and almost invariably fatal, death occurring in from forty-eight to ninety-six hours.

The gravity of the situation was so far recognised that the owners refused to take any Chinese passengers for Chefoo on board the boat, with the exception of my Chinese boy. Therefore we had the whole ship to ourselves, apart from the officers and crew.

As a parting gift and souvenir of Newchwang, Dr. Daly brought me a flag which is being adopted by the Russians in connection with their Manchurian railway system. It has the Chinese dragon in one corner, and the Russian colours in the other, and is very significant of the way in which the wind is blowing.

Mr. Chen-Yu-Ting, one of the Chinese gentlemen who had tiffin with me yesterday, also sent me his photograph and a second photograph of the Emperor and four of the most enlightened Reformers.

The s.s. 'Higo-Maru' was also leaving Newchwang for Chefoo that afternoon, but though she is a fast boat, I preferred the cleanliness and wholesome food on the 'Tamsui' to a repetition of my experiences hereafter described on board the Japanese ship.

In coming down the river we had a strong summer gale blowing, and I was much impressed with the steadiness and seaworthy qualities of the huge Chinese junks which were also on their way to sea. The design for the English turret ships was suggested by the Chinese junk, which is constructed on the same model to-day as has been in vogue for the last two thousand years. The upper part is perpendicular and narrow, a short distance above the water-line it bulges right out on both sides, which makes it not only a good sea-boat, but also gives below water a large carrying capacity. The way the Chinese sailors handle their junks shows them to be very skilful seamen.

I said 'Good-bye' to Captain McSwiney at Dr. Daly's. He starts to-morrow for England. He purposes going up through Manchuria and right across Siberia and Russia, in order to gain as much knowledge as possible of what is being done. He is doing this entirely on his own initiative, and at his own expense. His regiment, the 7th Dragoon Guards, is at present stationed at Aldershot, and I expect to meet him on my return home to compare notes.

NEWCHWANG TO CHEFOO

The sea was rough outside, but the 'Tamsui' being pretty well laden was remarkably steady, and we had on the whole a comfortable passage. We reached Chefoo in heavy rain next day. The port doctor, Mr. Molyneux, took me ashore in the Customs House boat between showers, but we were obliged to take shelter at Cornabe & Eckford's office, where we remained prisoners during the next two hours, the rain coming down in torrents. Mr. Anderson, of Cornabe & Eckford, who is also a member of the Reform Club, gave me his views of the situation in China. He showed me a petition to her Majesty's Government, which is to be signed at every port in China, urging that British rights and interests should be upheld in a more vigorous fashion. The document, however, was far too vague; it contained no clear and definite statement of what the merchants out here really want, and therefore it is not likely to count for anything with Lord Salisbury.

CHAPTER II

CHEFOO TO TIENTSIN

I WENT on board Messrs. Butterfield & Swire's boat, the 'Wuchang,' at twelve o'clock (noon), expecting that she would sail immediately, but found that the rain which was falling had compelled them to stop discharging her cargo, and it was five o'clock before she actually sailed.

Among the goods which were being unloaded at Chefoo were cotton piece-goods from England and America, also rice, sugar, paper, and dried seaweed. The sea was pretty rough, even in the harbour, and we expected to be pitched about when we got outside. The wind, however, dropped, and we had a fairly smooth passage to Taku Bar, the entrance to the Pei-ho, which leads up to Tientsin. We arrived at the Bar at eleven o'clock, only to find that it was low water and that the detention of several hours before the steamer could enter the river would cause us to miss the last train to Tientsin. We, however, succeeded in getting a tug-boat to take us up after waiting about three hours. Though this boat only drew about five feet of water, she stuck on

the bar for a quarter of an hour, until the water rose a little further.

Close by us, at anchor, were five new cruisers which had just been purchased by the Chinese Government. Two of them were built by Armstrong, Mitchell, & Co., of Newcastle-on-Tyne, and the other three by the Germans. They are said to be the fastest cruisers afloat, going twenty-four knots an hour, and are fitted with every modern appliance; but they just lie there—the Chinese practically do not cruise in them at all. It seems probable they will be of little value to the Chinese as a fighting power. One Italian and one Austrian cruiser were anchored alongside the Chinese ships.

One of Messrs. Holt Brothers' steamers from Liverpool, about 9,000 tons burden, was discharging cargo into huge lighters. She could not cross the bar even at high water, and, indeed, much smaller steamers have to discharge a considerable portion of their cargo outside before they are able to enter. The river up to Tientsin has been allowed to silt up to such an extent that no steamers are able at present to reach it. From our steamer they began to discharge China tea, which was on its way from Hankow to Russia. The Russians are by far the largest consumers of China tea, which they prefer to our Indian and Ceylon tea. Large quantities of arsenic powder were also being put on board a lighter—this is used for preserving skins. Tientsin is a great centre for trade in all kinds of furs and skins, including sables.

THE PEI-HO AND TAKU FORTS

After crossing the bar we approached the entrance to the Pei-ho—the word 'ho' in China means river, so it is really the Pei River. On both sides are the huge mud forts of Taku, which have more than once offered a stout resistance to the English and French in their wars with China. These are very extensive, and have many guns mounted. On the way up the river were more mud forts.

We passed the Imperial Naval Yard, which looked in a somewhat dilapidated condition. There were also in the river several new torpedo destroyers, which have been built in England for the Chinese Government.

On both sides of the river, flat marshy land stretched away as far as the eye could reach. A number of curious horizontal windmills were revolving and pumping up sea water into large reservoirs, where it is allowed to evaporate, and then the salt which remains is collected.

TONG-KU

On landing at Tong-Ku, where we took the train, we were surrounded by a large crowd of coolies clamouring to carry the baggage. When given the job they began to demand extortionate terms. As there was no fixed tariff, and no other means of getting our baggage to the railway station, we had to submit—the amount paid for a quarter of an hour's work being equivalent to a day's wage. They reminded

me somewhat of the crowd that used to lay hold of one's baggage by main force on landing at Tunis.

EVIDENCE OF BRITISH TRADE

When I got on the landing-stage I was much gratified to see a huge pile of new steel rails bearing the stamp of the Barrow Hematite Steel Company, Limited. It gave me great encouragement in the efforts I am making to promote British trade with China to have this practical proof that the miners of the Barnsley Division have a direct personal interest in the railway extensions which are being made in China, for no doubt both coal and coke from the Barrow Collieries were used in the production of these rails at the Barrow Works.

TIENTSIN

We had a pleasant journey of an hour and a half by rail up to Tientsin (twenty-seven miles). On the way from the railway station my jinricksha passed through the French settlement of Tientsin, where the whole of the streets are named in French. On entering the English settlement I found myself dashing along Victoria Road. The buildings in this settlement are excellent structures of stone and brick, and while in the European quarter it is difficult to imagine that you are in China. I called on Mr. Cousins, of Messrs. Jardine, Matheson, & Co., and went with him to hear a rather good band which was playing in the public gardens.

FROM TIENTSIN TO PEKIN

I left Tientsin on August 27, in company with Mr. Hillier, the manager of the Hong-Kong and Shanghai Bank at Pekin. We travelled in what is known as the postal car, which was really comfortable. The country from Tientsin to Pekin —a distance of about eighty miles, which we did in three hours—is absolutely flat. As you approach Pekin there is a fine range of hills which runs from east to west, broken in outline, and forming a beautiful background across the plain.

There are very few trees until nearing Pekin, when the country is fairly well wooded. The extensive plain was covered with splendid crops of millet and other cereals. At one railway station I was glad to have a further practical proof of how the working men at home are interested in the development and opening up of China in the shape of a trainload of bridge girders made in Glasgow.

PEKIN

The Pekin terminus is about five miles from the city. There are beautifully fitted tramcars driven by electricity for a portion of the way, but these are of little use to passengers with baggage. There are three modes of getting from the railway station into the Tartar city of Pekin. First by one of the numerous covered-in carts, which are drawn by mules and trundle along in a perfect cloud of dust, which is literally inches thick along the

roadway; second, to ride into the city on a donkey; third, to be carried in a sedan chair by four stalwart Chinamen. I adopted the last-named. The men went along at a swinging pace, and gave a sort of jerky motion to the chair which was not altogether agreeable. They landed me safely at the Hong-Kong and Shanghai Bank—where I was put up by Mr. Hillier—in an hour and a quarter, a distance of over five miles. At the end of the first two miles we came to the outer city wall and entered by a gateway into the Chinese city. After passing through a portion of the city we traversed a broad road with waste ground on each side of it, and beyond it on the right hand was the 'Temple of Heaven' and on the left the 'Temple of Agriculture,' both in huge walled enclosures. As we passed along the streets the people gazed with considerable curiosity on the 'foreign devil.' Many of the shops have fronts of beautifully carved woodwork. They open on to the street, and large quantities of clothes and other articles which are offered for sale are spread out on the roadway, where they are soon covered with dust.

We shortly came to the massive wall surrounding the Tartar city, which we entered by a huge gateway, and soon afterwards arrived at Legation Street, in which most of the Foreign Legations are situated, and also the Hong-Kong and Shanghai Bank.

The population of Pekin is estimated at about 700,000. There is no other city like it in the

universe, and, though terribly dirty, it is most interesting.

On arrival, I found an invitation to dine with Mr. Bax Ironside, H.B.M. Chargé d'Affaires, the same evening. Mr. Hillier took me round to the very cosmopolitan club, where we found lawn tennis in full swing. Some sets were being played by men of four distinct nationalities, who, though they may be fighting each other strenuously in regard to political affairs, still meet in a perfectly friendly way on this neutral ground. The club is situated just within the great wall surrounding the Tartar city.

Mr. Bredon, Sir Robert Hart's Assistant Comptroller of Customs, dined with me at Mr. Bax Ironside's, and we had a long and animated talk on all the important events that have happened in China during the last two years.

Before leaving Mr. Hillier's I went into the dining-room, where he was entertaining five Chinese gentlemen at dinner. I was introduced to Hu-Yuen-Meh, the president of the Chinese railways, who was ousted from that position by intrigue largely on account of his friendliness to the English, and replaced by Chang-Yi, the president now in power.

VISIT TO MISSION STATION

The weather was perfect, and, contrary to expectation, not at all unbearably hot. My first expedition was in search of the Rev. Mr. Stonehouse at the London Mission, to whom I had a letter of

introduction from my friend Mr. Albert Spicer, M.P. I was conveyed in one of the ordinary Chinese carts without springs and drawn by a mule. The roads in Pekin, with the exception of Legation Street, are simply in the condition that they have been in for centuries—ankle-deep in dust or mud, according to the weather, and with deep ruts everywhere. It was a case not exactly of 'rattle his bones over the stones,' but of 'rattle his bones over the ruts.' I reached my destination in a very sore and battered condition, only to find that I had been brought to the wrong mission station. Two lady missionaries, however, very kindly undertook to send my letter across the city to Mr. Stonehouse, and to ask him to come and see me at the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank. They also suggested that if I sat outside the cart on the shaft I should feel the jolting much less, and it was in this fashion that I made the return journey—having to hold on pretty tight to avoid being thrown off.

I left cards on M. de Giers and M. Kroupensky at the Russian Legation, and then called on Mr. Bax Ironside, with whom I spent two hours in the discussion of the political situation. I came away convinced that our representatives out here do all in their power, and that their failure to maintain British rights and interests has been and is largely due to the want of proper support and backing on the part of Lord Salisbury, by whose direction every surrender has been made.

INTERVIEW WITH M. KROUPENSKY

In the afternoon, M. Kroupensky, from the Russian Legation, returned my call, and we had a most lively discussion, lasting two hours and a half, on all the difficulties which have arisen between England and Russia in China. From a Russian standpoint he made an able defence of the action that they have taken in regard to various matters. He spoke English perfectly, and displayed a complete knowledge and grasp of every question. He promised me a letter of introduction to the Governor of Port Arthur.

CALL ON JAPANESE MINISTER

I next called upon the Japanese Minister, to whom I had a letter of introduction from Viscount Aoki, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Japan. The Minister was out of Pekin, but I saw his First Secretary, with whom I had a long conversation on my experiences in Japan and on the political situation generally, both past and present. In common with every other Japanese politician or diplomatist whom I have met, he was full of friendly expressions towards England, and, above everything else, desirous that there should be complete co-operation in the furtherance of our mutual interests in the Far East.

THE TARTAR CITY WALL

My last expedition for the day was to ascend the great Wall surrounding the Tartar City, and to pass

along the top for a mile or so to the Great Central Pagoda over the main entrance. The view it commands is extensive, as Pekin is situated on a perfectly flat plain. The city contains everywhere an abundance of fine timber, and behind this, as a background, runs the range of Western Hills, making Pekin attractive from a scenic point of view. There is, however, practically no drainage whatever, and naturally the smells encountered everywhere, coupled with the filth and dirt, somewhat lessen one's pleasure. I would not, however, on any account, have missed seeing Pekin. The narrow streets, through which one had to pick one's way, were crowded with people pursuing their various avocations and journeying to and fro without a thought, for the most part, of the great world outside their city, and, if I am correctly informed, with few exceptions, in complete ignorance of the political events so vitally affecting their great Empire, which have been occurring in such rapid succession for the last two years. I had heard much of anti-foreign feeling, but though I passed freely along the streets, beyond a certain exhibition of curiosity, I did not see the slightest display of incivility.

There were numerous donkeys, with jingling bells, astride of which Chinamen, clad in gorgeous raiment and fine linen, sat unconcernedly amidst the jostling crowds in these Chinese thoroughfares. The musical cries of itinerant vendors of various trades, of donkey boys and chair-bearers, fell upon the ear; and in the night there was the barking of innumerable dogs.

In winter clouds of dust sweep over Pekin from the Gobi Desert in Mongolia—denser, even, and more penetrating than a London fog.

CITY WALLS, PEKIN

The Tartar or Inner City, and the Chinese or Outer City, are both surrounded by walls which consist of a stone foundation and two brick walls filled in between with mud. Those of the northern or Tartar city are about 40 feet high; at the base about 50 feet thick, narrowing to 36 feet at the top and defended by massive buttresses at intervals of 300 yards. There are nine gates leading into it, above each of which a pagoda of striking appearance, about 100 feet high, is raised; besides these, each gate has on the outside a semi-circular—on some gates a square—enceinte in which a somewhat smaller pagoda stands opposite to the gate pagoda. The middle gate of the southern side, the Ch'ien-men, or Front Gate, whose enceinte is pierced by three entrances, is much the largest.

FORBIDDEN CITY, PEKIN

Inside the Tartar City is the 'Forbidden City,' where the Imperial Palaces are situated. This is also surrounded by a wall, and no foreigner or Chinaman not occupying a certain official position has been admitted beyond the first building inside the main entrance. There is a mountain of coal just inside the wall, which can be seen from the outside. It has been there 300 years, and is supposed to

be a reserve stock for use in the Imperial Palaces in any time of siege. The Celestials apparently do not know that after being exposed to the atmosphere for 300 years the burning qualities of the material would be gone.

THE GOVERNMENT OF CHINA

Next day my first call was upon Mr. Pethick, an American, who is one of the private secretaries of Li-Hung-Chang. He informed me that the Board of Foreign Affairs, known as the Tsung-li-Yamen, has really no executive power. They hear statements of cases, and then report through their president to the Grand Council of State, which consists of about ten members. This council considers various questions, and attaches to the documents relating to each case a piece of red paper, on which their decision is written. If they do not arrive at a unanimous conclusion, then the opinions of those dissenting are also stated. The members of the Grand Council go to the Imperial Palace every morning at daybreak, and are received in audience by the Empress Dowager. All the documents relating to the affairs of State are then submitted, one by one, for the approval, or otherwise, of the Empress Dowager. She signifies her approval by making a small spot on the margin of the red paper with one of the brushes with which the Chinese write. In the absence of this indication of sanction on her part the matter falls to the ground, and her power is absolute and final.

Members of the Grand Council, and also of

the Tsung-li-Yamen, are appointed solely by the Empress, and one and all are liable to instant dismissal by her. The Grand Council is really the Government or Cabinet of the country, and is, as a rule, mainly composed of those who preside over the Boards controlling the various departments of State. The deposed young Emperor occasionally sits beside the Empress Dowager when she receives her Ministers.

DEPOSITION OF THE EMPEROR

A most serious blunder, far-reaching in its consequences, was made by the British Government when they tamely allowed the deposition of the Emperor in 1898 and the usurpation of the throne by the Empress Dowager. The young Emperor was undoubtedly in favour of reform and the opening of China to trade, whilst the Empress Dowager is reactionary and anti-foreign. Under her rule the most unenlightened, corrupt, and anti-foreign place-hunters are in office.

The way in which the British Minister not only acquiesced in the *coup d'état,* but actually arranged with the Empress Dowager to give a reception to ladies of the British and other Legations, was a scandal.

This proceeding gave an emphatic official sanction to the removal of the Emperor and the assumption of his position by the Empress Dowager. It encouraged anti-foreign feeling and discouraged the party of reform.

The policy pursued is responsible for the lives of scores of the most patriotic Chinese reformers which were sacrificed; it enabled the reactionary elements in the country to triumph, and dealt a heavy blow at the reform movement.

A substantial majority of the inhabitants of China are opposed to the Manchu Dynasty now ruling the Empire. The Manchus, however, being a more warlike race, dominate the Chinese by Manchu garrisons stationed at various centres throughout the Empire.

Now that the trend of events is in the direction of the absorption by Russia of Manchu populations in Manchuria and the North of China, it is not improbable that the Chinese may ultimately succeed in throwing off the yoke of the Manchus and setting up a purely Chinese Government.

Meantime it is certain that the Chinese reformers of the South would favour the restoration of the rightful Emperor rather than the continuance in power of the Empress Dowager.

PEKIN EUNUCHS

I am told that the eunuchs at the Palace, of whom there are about 200, practically rule China. They have acquired great influence over the Empress Dowager. It is said that official appointments and concessions can only be got by bribing the Eunuchs. The Eunuchs and those in command of the military forces are said to share the 'squeezes,' which they would lose were administrative reforms introduced.

INTERVIEW WITH PRINCE CHING

I paid another visit to the British Legation, and had a further conversation with the Chargé d'Affaires in the absence of Sir Claude Macdonald. Mr. Bax Ironside had forwarded on the previous day a letter of introduction from Lord Charles Beresford to Prince Ching, a Prince of the Imperial family of China and President of the Tsung-li-Yamen, and the reply came that His Highness would be pleased to give me an audience at the Yamen at three o'clock in the afternoon. At that hour I was at the entrance of the Yamen, and was ceremoniously conducted into an audience hall, where I found a round table covered with fruit, biscuits, and sweets. Prince Ching's interpreter, who spoke fairly good English, came and chatted to me along with three members of the Tsung-li-Yamen. He explained that His Highness was being interviewed by the Italian Minister, but that he would not be detained long. In a very few minutes Prince Ching came into the audience hall, and I was presented to him.

We at once took seats round the table, and tea and Chinese wines were served. Our conversation was of the most interesting and pleasant character. The Prince appeared to be an honest and straightforward man, and put some very pertinent questions. The hall in which the audience took place was a large square room with an overhanging roof, and had a verandah all round it; the windows were filled with leaded panes, reminding me of church casements. The roof was of carved and brightly painted wood-

work. Three other members of the Tsung-li-Yamen sat at the same table with Prince Ching and myself; their secretaries occupied seats on a sort of couch, which ran all round the room, fixed to the wall; whilst other attendants stood and listened to what was said. This is usual at such audiences, and the fact that so many individuals hear everything, even at the most important interviews, accounts for the impossibility of keeping anything secret that transpires at the Tsung-li-Yamen in regard to political or other affairs.

I urged upon His Highness that the only hope of averting the partition of China lay in :—

First.—The prompt settlement of all outstanding differences with England and other powers.

Second.—A resolute refusal of concessions violating the Treaty rights of other nations.

Third.—The seeking the assistance of English, Japanese, and American officers in the immediate re-organisation of her military and naval forces.

His Highness expressed his hearty approval of the line of policy which I advocated, and stated that it would receive his serious consideration.

Prince Ching made most friendly references to England. He said he had always regarded her as the friend of China, but had been greatly disappointed at the refusal of the necessary support to the Chinese Government to enable them to resist the demands of other Powers which involved violations of the Treaty of Tientsin.

The audience lasted nearly an hour.

INTERVIEW WITH LI-HUNG-CHANG

I next proceeded to Li-Hung-Chang's private residence, where I found Mr. Pethick, who had arranged the interview, awaiting me. I was soon face to face with the great Chinaman who has played so important a part in the affairs of China during the last half-century. He was associated closely with Gordon in overcoming the Taiping Rebellion, and has from time to time held some of the highest official positions in China. He represented his country on a most important mission to Europe, visiting in the course of it practically all the European Courts, where he was received with every mark of distinction. It was he who settled the terms of peace with the Marquis Ito at Shimonoseki. Many people openly accuse him of having sold his country into the hands of Russia. As to the truth of this I know nothing, but I found it extremely interesting to meet so notable a man, whose ability and shrewdness are undoubted. His Excellency asked me a great many questions, some of them of an almost impertinently inquisitive character; but, on the other hand, he made many inquiries about political and commercial affairs which revealed how complete a grasp he had of the present situation.

I urged upon him the necessity for adopting, as the one means of preventing the partition of China, the policy which I had submitted for the consideration of His Highness Prince Ching, and Li-Hung-Chang expressed his strong approval of my

suggestions. He stated that if they could be carried out he was prepared to devote the remainder of his life to the service of his country. Failing this, he considered the situation hopeless, and would remain in retirement. Mr. Pethick proved a most excellent interpreter, and my conversation was carried on with wonderful ease, though neither of us could speak a word of each other's language.

It is usual for Chinamen to be polite enough to profess to agree with whatever those who interview them say. It was, therefore, impossible to know whether these distinguished men really agreed with what I urged upon them or not.

The reason why I pressed the importance of endeavouring to secure the assistance of English, Japanese, and American military officers in the reorganisation of their military force, is that I do not approve of depriving the Chinese of their country, as some of the European Powers have done, but, if possible, wish to give them such help as will make them a strong and self-governing nation.

On my return to the Hong-Kong and Shanghai Bank from my audience with Li-Hung-Chang, I found two missionaries, Mr. Stonehouse and Mr. Rees, waiting to see me. The following is a summary of the information given me by Mr. Rees in regard to missions in a district within two hundred miles of Pekin.

RELIGION

As a rule, the Chinese care very little for their gods, and seldom pray to them except in time of trouble. Mr. Rees on one occasion happened to meet in the temple a man whose mother was seriously ill. He vowed to the god that if his mother was cured he would pay so much money to the temple. This man was fifty years of age, had a large family, and had not worshipped before this occasion for eighteen years. Mr. Rees gave another instance of Chinese seeking the assistance of their gods in the following anecdote of a man he met sixteen years ago. This man had propelled himself on all fours from Pekin to Tsi-nan, in the Province of Shantung, and back again, a distance of about 1,060 miles, to make a vow to a god that he would pay all he possessed if his father was cured of a certain disease called Tanza (paralysis). The Chinese spend enormous sums of money in superstitious observances, and in Mr. Rees's district (Chi-Chou) the usual subscription for each family to the local bonzes is about 10 tiao (10*s.*) per year.

At Chi-Chou there were 1,500 converts, the result of twelve years' work. Last year the number of Christian churches built by the natives was 44. The majority of the people are small farmers owning from 2 to 8 mow of land per family (6 mow equals 1 acre).

Last year Mr. Rees baptised about 800 in his church, who contributed 2*s.* 2*d.* a head, in addition

to which they supported schools. One man about 55 years of age, with neither wife, family, nor relatives, employed as a scavenger, who had saved in five or six years the sum of 32*s.*, gave the whole amount to the new church.

The Chinese women are more devotional than the men. It is with the former that the hope of the Church lies. Mrs. Rees has about 250 Chinese women under her charge. The Chinese men ostensibly look down upon the women, but, after all, the latter control the families.

Mr. Rees mentioned an interesting story told by one of his deacons about the penance done by a Chinese member of a secret society. This society is known as the 'One Piece Incense.' The unfortunate member had knelt on chains for two hours a day for eighteen years, and, of course, was crippled for life.

On one occasion an official invited himself to stay with Mr. Rees for three days to discuss Christianity. His chief topic was the immortality of the soul, and he was also convinced that one wife was the correct thing. As a result of the discussion he resigned office and retired to his ancestral home, saying he could not be an official and a Christian at the same time.

Ancestral worship is general all over the country. During the first moon and a certain day in the second moon every family worships at the family altar and the family grave, and this practice may be said to be almost universal.

SECRET SOCIETIES

The members of a Secret Society called the 'United Boxers,' in a fight with Catholics, killed seven. They also attacked the London Mission, which was surrounded by about 300 of them. When the converts heard of it, over 100 of them collected all the arms they could find to defend the mission. They put all the ladies and children in one house, where they were kept for three days and nights. The mission claimed the protection of the local official, but this was refused. An appeal was then made to the Consul in Tientsin, and the Viceroy sent a special commissioner. It appeared that the leader of the gang was a cousin of the local official. And this explained why the latter was unwilling to act.

The officials are almost bound to retain for their own use some portion of the revenue passing through their hands. Mr. Rees said the Governor of his county receives a salary of only 180*l.* per annum, but his establishment costs at least 5,000*l.* per annum, and the difference is raised by extortion.

Officials are paid in taels. The tael in this district is equivalent to 2,000 copper cash, but the official charges 5,100 copper cash per tael. The people have to pay in copper cash, the difference going into the official's pocket. The Governor gave 20,000 taels in order to get the appointment. It is difficult to learn much about the Chinese in cities. Mr. Rees said he learnt more in six months in the country than he did in six years in Pekin.

MR. HILLIER

Mr. Hillier, the manager of the Hong-Kong and Shanghai Bank in Pekin, who has been in China for many years, is said to speak the language like a native. He enjoys the confidence of many of the most enlightened and able Chinamen to an unusual extent, and has channels of information which make him one of the best-informed men as to what is actually transpiring from day to day in Pekin. He informed me that it is undoubted that a defensive alliance between Japan and China was almost brought about. The Empress Dowager, who was at one time favourable to Russia, became alarmed by their excessive demands. She and Prince Ching were in favour of seeking the co-operation of Japan in the maintenance of their mutual interests as against Russia. The eunuchs and certain Manchus who share the 'squeezes' which are obtainable as things now stand, strongly opposed. This opposition, and the distinct intimation to the Chinese Government by Russia that they would regard such an alliance as an unfriendly act, which would surely be followed with serious consequences to China, caused the negotiations to fall through.

Mr. Hillier held very strong views as to the disastrous effect upon British interests in China which had followed the want of a firm and definite policy unswervingly pursued on the part of the British Government. He regarded the loss of prestige and influence with the Chinese Government

as the result of a succession of humiliating surrenders. He was of opinion that the adoption of a firm and vigorous policy, in concert if possible with those powers who do not desire the partition of China, is imperatively necessary if the position is to be retrieved.

CHAPTER III

BRITISH TRADE AND BRITISH NEGLECT IN CHINA

On August 31 I left Pekin for Tientsin.

ENGLISH SETTLEMENT, TIENTSIN

The English settlement of Tientsin has a municipal council which looks after sanitary affairs, lighting, etc., exactly as at home. The freehold of the settlement is the property of the British Crown, which has merely granted leases to the present occupiers. In sixty years' time, unless the leases are renewed, the whole of the palatial property within the settlement will belong to the British Government without any payment on its part. The Britishers have, therefore, come out to this far-away part of the earth and settled upon land actually belonging to the British Government. The residents are very enterprising. They have taxed themselves not only with the cost of providing a public garden and the erection of a commodious town hall, but they are also subscribing a large sum of money for the purpose of deepening the Pei River by closing

up numerous canals. One great hindrance to trade at Tientsin is the bar at the mouth of the river. This could easily be removed, but the Chinese Government object on the ground that it is a protection against the entrance of foreign ships of war.

TRADE OF TIENTSIN

The total value of the trade of Tientsin in 1898 was 10,945,008*l.* 18*s.*

The net total of the foreign imports, which include very large quantities of British goods—the products of British labour—in 1898 amounted to 4,886,927*l.* 2*s.*

The tonnage of vessels entered and cleared in 1896 was 1,377,116 tons. Out of this, British shipping amounted to no less than 571,486 tons. Yet I was assured by every man I met in Tientsin, regardless of political parties –and the principal merchants there all met me at dinner on my arrival —that the British Government are not supporting and maintaining British rights and interests in North China. They stated that our prestige and influence with the Chinese Government—which was all-powerful only five years ago—has vanished. To-day the only chance of a British subject securing the redress of a grievance or the settlement of a dispute is to pay some foreigner to take over the transaction and deal with the Chinese Government through the representative here of their own nation.

The merchants of Tientsin are perfectly prepared

to construct a railway from Pekin to Kalgan, through the Nan-Kou Pass, which is the principal outlet through a range of mountains from Mongolia and Kan Suh, by which the wool, skins, and general produce can be brought to Tientsin. In return Manchester piece goods and other British manufactures would be taken. Our merchants informed the British authorities of their desire to undertake this work, only to be told that Russia objected, as Kalgan was on the Great Wall. The Anglo-Russian Agreement proposed to deal with Manchuria only, but I find that in reality it excludes the British, and hands over to the Russians not only Manchuria but Mongolia, a huge tract in the Province of Chihli and the Province of Sin Kiang or Eastern Turkestan. This enormous surrender of British trade rights and interests has been made without our receiving what could be considered compensating advantages in other directions. I can only conclude that, as in the case of Sin-Ming-Ting, the knowledge of geography on the part of the Foreign Office was so defective that they were unaware of what Russia was obtaining under the expression 'North of the Great Wall of China' when they allowed these words to be inserted in the agreement in substitution for the one word Manchuria—which was the sphere named by Russia when the negotiations began.

Our Government do not appear to have even asked for the recognition by Russia of similar preferential rights for England in Thibet, which is the only

territory now intervening between the Russian sphere and our Indian Empire.

The declared object of the Anglo-Russian Agreement was to avoid cause of conflict where the interests of Russia and England meet in China, and yet no provision whatever is made in it in regard to the enormous area south of the Great Wall and north of the Yang-tsze basin.

It accords Russia the exclusive right to construct railways north of the Great Wall and professes to confer a similar exclusive right on England in the Yang-tsze basin, but the agreement had already been broken by Russia's still concealed although well-known interest in the Pekin-Hankow Line, which will penetrate right down into the heart of the Yang-tsze basin.

RUSSIAN INTRIGUES

During the day of my arrival I had interviews with the British Consul and various merchants, and in the evening I met Mr. Kinder, the chief engineer of the Newchwang Railway Extension Line, whose dismissal the Russians have worked so hard to secure. He is being intrigued and plotted against both at home and abroad by Russian agents, for, with his removal, the hindrances to the absorption of the Newchwang Extension Line, which is being constructed with British capital, would be practically gone. The acquisition of this railway would give Russia control not only of Manchuria, but of Pekin

and the whole North of China, and enable her to strangle British trade.

Mr. Kinder tells me that the whole of the rails required for the railways under his management come from England and Scotland, as well as the locomotives—when our manufacturers can undertake to execute his orders—and thousands of wheels and axles are made in Sheffield by the Patent Shaft and Axle Co., Peach Steel and Tozer, and the Low Moor Company.

TRIP UP SHAN-HAI-KWAN-NEWCHWANG RAILWAY

September 1.—I left Tientsin this morning in a private car on a three days' expedition up the railway which is being built by British capital north of Shan-hai-Kwan. My host, Mr. Cousins, saw me off and made most kind arrangements in the matter of provisioning, for there were no hotels in the district through which I was going, and we had to take our supplies of food with us. The first stopping-place after leaving Tong-ku was Lutai.

At and around Lutai is a large Chinese military camp. Each regiment had a distinct camp enclosed by mud walls, around which gay flags were flying, the flags of each regiment being different in colour and design. As the Chinese General—Yang—was leaving by the train, guns were fired on his departure, and a crowd of officers escorted him to the platform. The men were of splendid physique, and looked equal to anything if they were only properly trained and armed. I took several snap-

shots of them with my kodak, which they quite enjoyed. The officers stood in a row facing the reserved car which the General occupied. He came out on to the platform before the train left, and the officers gave the 'kow-tow,' that is, bowed down so that their heads practically touched their knees, repeatedly to him. The General acknowledged the salutations in the same fashion. He was on his way to Kinchow to clear the country of bands of robbers known as 'hung-hood-se' (redbeards). It is said that these robbers are the best fighting men in China, and that they can beat overwhelming numbers of troops.

COAL MINING IN CHINA

Thirty miles further on we came to Tongshan, the district where magnesian limestone shows itself and under which are coal measures. The Kaiping collieries close by are the principal collieries of China. They produced 732,000 tons in 1898. At the Tongshan Mines the output was 470,000 tons, whilst at Linsi Colliery, about twelve miles away, 262,000 tons were brought to bank—making a total of 1,464,000 tons. The output of the Kaiping Collieries has gone down very much this year (1899) owing to the mines having been robbed previously. They have had a great influx of water, which is likely to cause serious difficulties. The greater part of the coal they produce is so inferior in quality that Mr. Kinder—the chief engineer of the railways—has been trying to

get consent to use Cardiff coal, at any rate for the express trains.

At Tongshan there are railway works, where they make their own carriages and put together locomotives and other engineering work imported.

Chung-hou-So, which is forty miles outside the Great Wall of China, through which the railway passes, is 214 miles from Tientsin. The country traversed is practically level; there is not a single tunnel. The railway track was in excellent order, and the travelling most comfortable. The plain on each side of the railway the whole way was covered with excellent crops of what the Chinese call 'kaoliang'—a kind of millet, also known as brown rice. It grows often ten to twelve feet high. The grain is the principal food of the people. The stalks, which partake of the nature of bamboo, are used for a variety of purposes, including fencing, roofing of houses, etc.; whilst the roots are dried and used as fuel. The kaoliang was in all its harvest glory, and stretching as it did for miles and miles under brilliant sunshine, the rich brown golden shades were very beautiful. The plain has a background of fine broken rocky hills, which adds greatly to the beauty and picturesqueness of the scenery. The inhabitants also grow beans, sweet potatoes, indigo, and tobacco, whilst near Chang-li is a rich fruit-growing district, producing in the open air excellent grapes, apples, apricots, peaches, and plums.

At Chang-li a crowd of fruit vendors besieged the

train, and three to four pounds of excellent grapes were obtainable for $2\frac{1}{2}d$.

There were here and there isolated hills rising up out of the plain, the strata of which was tilted at a considerable angle—evidently due to volcanic action.

At Lang Chou we crossed a splendidly constructed iron railway bridge over 700 yards in length. The whole of the girders for this and other bridges on this railway have come from England and Scotland. Some people say that it does not matter whether the railways are constructed in China by Britishers or by Russians, French or Germans. It is only, however, in the case of this railway over which I was travelling, and which is being laid down with British capital, that the products of British labour can be employed, but this is only done if they can be got on as favourable terms from England as from other nations. We thus deal justly by the Chinese people in enabling them to buy what they require in the best and cheapest market—in marked contrast to the action of Russia, France, and Germany, who insist upon having the railways for which they have obtained concessions, constructed entirely of materials bought from the country of the concessionnaires irrespective of whether or not they can be obtained more cheaply elsewhere.

Most of the officials superintending the construction of the extension part of the line, and working the portion already opened, are Britishers. The

engine-drivers of express trains are also British, and receive 18*l.* a month wages. If the chief engineer had a free hand he would employ many more British engine drivers, but the Chinese Government prevent this. The Russians, French, and Germans have in connection with the railways they lay down absolute control both in the construction and in the working of the lines after they are completed, and can employ as many of their own countrymen as they choose on the railway as engine-drivers or otherwise.

Lord Salisbury allowed the terms which were imposed upon us in connection with the New-chwang Extension Railway to be dictated by Russia, who, on the other hand, enjoys in connection with the railways she is building absolute power to do whatever she pleases.

Nearly all the towns passed were surrounded by high stone walls, turreted on the top.

At Shan-hai-Kwan we saw the Great Wall of China, stretching right up over precipitous mountains 1,000 to 1,500 feet high. It seems almost incredible that it could have been constructed.

On reaching Chung-hou-So, the furthermost point north to which the railway is yet opened for passenger traffic, I was conveyed on a trolly two miles further up the line to the house of the resident engineer (Mr. Newmarch). The trolly was propelled at a remarkable speed by four Chinamen, who stood on it working handles which were attached to the wheels by a crank shaft. When we came to an

obstruction on the line they lifted the trolley bodily off and carried it past the block. While doing so they uttered musical cries in order to mark time so that they might keep step. Chinamen invariably adopt this custom in their vocations. I dined with the Newmarches; the nearest European to them lives fifteen miles away, so that they don't often have visitors, and naturally that made my welcome all the warmer. After dinner I returned to my comfortable railway car at the station, and at six o'clock the next morning started on the return journey. It was quite cold in the night, and in the morning the crisp air felt very much the same as it does at home on a September morning.

PEI-TAI-HO

On reaching Pei-tai-ho I found a 'chit' from Mr. Mackintosh, the manager of the Hong-Kong and Shanghai Bank at Tientsin, placing a pony and a boy at my disposal. I first rode over to Rocky Point, five miles away—the new Eastern Settlement at the edge of the sea. This and the Western Settlement have sprung up in the last three years. There are quite a number of pretty villas, to which Europeans come in the hot weather, to enjoy the fresh sea breezes. It was a most delightful ride along a track lined by magnificent crops of ripe millet or kaoliang, with an occasional cluster of trees and a picturesque hamlet of Chinese houses. The inhabitants were busily engaged threshing out grain by what was to me a new method. They form a level floor of mud,

which dries as hard as cement; this is covered with ears of grain, and a stone roller drawn round and round by a donkey on the top of the grain squeezes it out of the ears. They were also grinding the grain ready for making it into food by revolving a stone roller over a flat millstone, instead of revolving a flat millstone on another flat millstone.

BARON VON KETTELER

I first called upon the German Minister, Baron Von Ketteler, who received me most courteously. We had an interesting talk on the situation in China, in the course of which reference was made, with mutual satisfaction, to the fact that the Germans and English have arranged to jointly construct the Tien-tsin-Chin Kiang Railway. Baron Von Ketteler also assured me of his desire that the relations between England and Germany should grow more and more friendly, and that the two nations might be able to co-operate in furtherance of our mutual interests, not only in the Far East but elsewhere. His sympathies, next to the Teutonic race, he said, were strongly Anglo-Saxon. He expressed the opinion that, in order to give any chance of the creation in China of a strong and independent government, it would be necessary, in the first place, to put an end to the corruption and bribery which is almost universal amongst the official classes. I suggested that it was desirable that Germany should, in addition to developing the Province of Shantung, also include in her sphere the whole

watershed of the Yellow River. I explained that I did not mean that the country should be taken from the Chinese, but that they should be assisted in the development of it for the mutual advantage of the Chinese and of other nations.

SIR ROBERT HART

I then rode a further three miles along the sea coast westward to the residence of Sir Robert Hart, the head of the Imperial Chinese Customs, who gave me a cordial welcome and insisted on my being his guest. Sir Robert Hart had been more than forty years in China as the head of the one department which is free from corruption, and which pays into the Chinese Exchequer the full amount of the duties collected on foreign imports. He spoke in the highest terms of the Chinese, and is absolutely devoted to their interests. He favoured the collection of likin by his department, provided arrangements were made for the proper payment of Chinese officials, and for the provincial treasuries receiving an adequate proportion of the revenues. Should, as seems only too probable, the Chinese have murdered their loyal friend and old faithful servant, they will be guilty of an act of the basest ingratitude.

CHIN WANG TAO

There is a point on the coast of the Gulf of Pechili, about twelve miles from Pei-tai-ho, Ching wan tao, which the British Government got opened as a treaty port, proclaiming this as a most important

achievement in the interests of British commerce. To my astonishment, however, I found there neither port nor natural harbour, and no resident population whatever. It is merely an open bay surrounded by sandbanks. There are some who say it will prove an open-all-the-year-round port, whilst Newchwang and Tientsin are frozen up several months in the year, and that collieries will be opened close by, the produce of which will be shipped there.

PEI-TAI-HO TO TONG-KU

The next morning I started at 6.30 and had a most enjoyable ride on a donkey over the hills and through the millet fields to Pei-tai-ho station, and at one o'clock was at Tong-Ku, ready to go on board whatever steamer was available for Chefoo. On the way down we again took in supplies of fruit at Chang-li, and I got a party of four Europeans who were in the train into my car. We 'pooled' our respective provisions and had quite an enjoyable luncheon party. The climate of this district, I learn, is one of the best in the world, and certainly the Europeans looked in splendid health, and the Chinese themselves are a sturdy, active race. The more I see of the Chinese the better I like them.

A LUCKY CHOICE

On arrival at Tong-Ku, the Chinese compradores of both Messrs. Jardine, Matheson, & Co. and Messrs. Butterfield & Swire met me at the station to give me their assistance in embarking on board their

respective steamers. The arrangement had been that I should take the first steamer, and this I could not decide until I got the information from the captains. I went on board the nearest boat, Messrs. Jardine & Matheson's 'El Dorado,' first, and had not been there more than five minutes when a tug boat arrived alongside with Messrs. Butterfield & Swire's comprador on board, anxious to take me off to the 'Chung King,' bag and baggage. It was quite amusing to see the alertness of these men, and their determination, if possible, to induce me to travel by the particular steamer in which they were interested. It was a fair sample of the commercial qualities of the Chinaman. As both steamers were leaving by the same tide, and I had made the acquaintance of Captain Tamplin, a most excellent and trustworthy officer, I decided to remain on board the 'El Dorado.' We started about midnight, and were only able to cross the Taku bar by ploughing a furrow at least a foot deep through the soft mud.

The weather had been delightfully fine up to the time of starting, but a sudden squall came on and both ship, passengers, and baggage were pitched about unmercifully for several hours. The next day the sea went down rapidly, and with perfect weather we made good progress.

I had, I am afraid, a sense of satisfaction in the selection of the boat which I had made on hearing that the other steamer had stuck fast upon the Taku bar and been left twelve hours behind.

We reached Chefoo safely, where I disembarked.

CHAPTER IV

A VISIT TO WEI HAI-WEI

Messrs. Jardine, Matheson, & Co.'s agent at Chefoo very kindly agreed that the 'El Dorado'—which was starting in a few hours for Shanghai—should go into Wei-hai-Wei and put me ashore. Our Consul (Mr. Sundyus) was kind enough to telegraph to Capt. Gaunt, the Commissioner at Wei-hai-Wei, to expect me. The weather was perfect, and we had a most delightful run of a little over four hours along the coast to Wei-hai-Wei. We passed through the western deep-water inlet into the wide bay within. It was sunset—the lights and shades and colouring of the bay and the hills around were most beautiful. When about an hour off Wei-hai-Wei, we saw a curious storm whirling over that place, and on landing I learnt there had been a remarkable waterspout. It was estimated to be at least 1,000 feet high, and 100 feet in diameter. We came closer into the shore than when I passed Wei-hai-Wei bound for Chefoo, and I now discovered that there were considerable fishing villages along the coast, and that the land, which is cultivated in terraces, is more fertile than I had imagined.

AN INCIDENT OF THE CHINO-JAPANESE WAR

Capt. Tamplin of the 'El Dorado' was first officer on board the British steamer 'Kowshing,' which was sunk by the Japanese, with 1,500 soldiers on board, as practically the first act of war on the part of Japan. This was done although the 'Kowshing' was flying the British flag, after she had been given an opportunity to surrender. The captain, knowing there was no escape, was prepared to surrender, but the Chinese soldiers on board would not allow it. They preferred that the ship should be sunk and their lives lost there and then, rather than be subjected to the tortures which they themselves are in the habit of inflicting upon prisoners, and which they imagined would be their fate if they fell alive into the hands of the Japanese. Capt. Tamplin told us that the 'Kowshing' was not torpedoed, as has been currently reported, but sunk by shot and shell. The captain himself and General Von Hanneken were the only European survivors. They saved their lives by plunging into the sea and swimming to the Japanese man-of-war. Whilst they were thus endeavouring to escape, the Chinese soldiers on board their own steamer tried to shoot them, under the impression that their capture had been effected through the bribery of the British officers by the Japanese. The claim which was made by the British Government on the Chinese Government for the value of the steamer and for

compensation for the Britishers on board who lost their lives or property has not yet been paid.

WEI-HAI-WEI

The 'El Dorado' dropped anchor directly opposite Capt. Gaunt's (the Commissioner's) residence, which is in a picturesque and attractive square of buildings, with several courtyards inside. These were used by the Chinese when in occupation of this place as the Naval Reception Yamen.

The Chinese town of Wei-hai-Wei is on the mainland, and it is on the inland side of the island Liu-Kung-tau ('tau' being Chinese for island), which is two and a quarter miles long and three-quarters of a mile in width, that the new Wei-hai-Wei is situated. At the western end of this island is one inlet into Wei-hai-Wei harbour, which is one and a quarter miles wide. In this is the deep-water channel, with nine to seventeen fathoms of water, 600 to 700 yards in width.

At the eastern end of the island is the other entrance to the harbour, about two and a half miles across, with an average depth of twenty-one feet at low water of ordinary summer-spring tides, and a foot or two more when there is an ordinary summer tide. It is a curious fact that in the winter the water is two or three feet lower than in summer. It is this broad entrance, perfectly accessible to torpedo boats at any point, which makes Wei-hai-Wei comparatively useless as a naval base, unless an

enormous breakwater be constructed, at a cost, possibly, of two or three million pounds sterling, to reduce the width of the entrance, so that it can be readily and effectually defended against an enemy.

A QUESTION FOR THE NAVAL AUTHORITIES

When we remember that Russia's great naval base at Port Arthur is only eighty-five miles away, it will be clear that Wei-hai-Wei will be too much at her mercy if left in its present condition. The question facing the naval authorities at home is whether they are prepared to spend the money necessary to make it into an impregnable first-class naval base, or leave the object for which they took it unattained. Any expenditure that did not accomplish this would be merely money wasted.

On the island and the neighbouring shores of the mainland there are a number of forts, from which the Japanese removed all the guns when they evacuated the place. Though we have been in possession of Wei-hai-Wei for the last fifteen months (1899), not a single gun has been mounted; and, indeed, none of the other works which are required, if it is to be made even a secondary naval base, have yet been commenced. No attempt has been made to repair the substantial iron pier, half of which is in excellent order, and the columns of the remaining half all in position, waiting only for the upper part to be fixed to make a necessary and serviceable landing-stage. Were this done, steamers

drawing up to twenty-five feet of water could safely go alongside.

CHINESE TROOPS

The only practical step of a defensive character that seems to have been taken has been the enrolment by Colonel Bower of 300 Chinese soldiers, who are rapidly being trained into smart, well-drilled troops. They are quartered on the mainland, about four miles across the bay. I went over to see Colonel Bower, and was taken round the barracks. The men were mustered, so that I might take some snapshots with my kodak, in order to show my friends at home. These soldiers are paid eight dollars (Mexican) a month, in addition to rations. At the end of the month, when they received their money in full, without anything being deducted by the paymaster for what is known in China as 'squeeze,' they were greatly astonished. As the news of this unusual treatment spread, the number of recruits applying multiplied.

Commissioner Gaunt very kindly placed his steam launch at my disposal, and I was able to get about the bay, and see everything.

I visited also the walled-in Chinese town of Wei-hai-Wei, which is on the mainland, and has about 5,000 inhabitants. The houses are of stone with excellent tiled roofs.

There are hot sulphur springs of a temperature of about eighty deg., with baths kept in excellent order.

THE ENGLISH SPHERE

The English 'sphere' is ten miles inland from the shores of the harbour, and a great mistake has been made in leaving this Chinese town—in our sphere—under Chinese jurisdiction. A short time ago Chinese soldiers pursued a Chinaman through British territory and killed him in the sea. It was alleged that he was a deserter. All attempts to secure the arrest of the officer who was at the head of these Chinese soldiers have failed by reason of the weakness of the British Representative at Pekin, who wishes to accept the excuses of the Yamen, and to let the matter drop.

This increases enormously the difficulties of the Commissioner, who is expected to keep order and to protect life and property in our Wei-hai-Wei territory—an area of 300 square miles and containing a population of nearly 300,000 souls, with a force of ten Chinese policemen under an English superintendent.

Included in what is leased to us is Shi-tao Bay, with splendid fisheries, also quarries from which any quantity of excellent red granite can be obtained.

In addition to the territory thus acquired we enjoy the right of moving troops up to 121 deg. 40 min. longitude, and of erecting barracks and hospitals.

The Wei-hai-Wei harbour covers about 20 square miles—it varies in width from 4 to 4½ miles. The deep-water portion, 6 to 10 fathoms, is, however,

only about 700 square yards. A dredger is at work increasing the deep-water area, and as the mud is very soft it is not anticipated that there will be any serious difficulty in accomplishing this. A deep-water dock could be easily made at a moderate cost.

HOSPITALITY AFLOAT

I went on board H.M.'s first-class cruiser 'Aurora,' to pay my respects to Post-Captain Bailey. I also called on Lieutenant Cowper, commanding H.M.'s gunboat 'Plover,' and he very kindly agreed that I might go back with him in the 'Plover' to Chefoo the next day.

Captain Gaunt invited the captain of the Italian man-of-war which was then at Wei-hai-Wei, also the British naval and military officers, to meet me at tiffin, and in the evening we all went to dine with Post-Captain Bailey on board the 'Aurora.' Captain Bailey is a fine specimen of a breezy, hearty British sailor. He reminded me of Lord Charles Beresford. His hospitality was of the most generous description, and, when we had in addition an excellent band of music on a deck closed in all round with gay flags of all nations, and brilliantly lighted with electric light, one felt that even right away in the Far East one had not got beyond the bounds of civilisation or of pleasant social life.

Before dinner Captain Gaunt and I mounted ponies, and had an hour's scamper round the island, in the course of which we saw the shooting ranges, which are of the most complete description.

We met a procession of men uttering loud lamentations, followed by a small procession of women with white garments over their heads. I thought that they were mourners who were sorrowing for the loss of some loved one, and was surprised to learn that they were really mourning aloud for ancestors, some of whom had died 100 or even 200 years ago.

The Commissioner had bought up a number of graves, and this was the ceremonial attending the removal of their departed ancestors to a new resting-place. The worship of their ancestors seems to have the strongest hold upon the Chinese and forms the salient feature in their religion.

At 6.30 A.M. the next morning I was on the top of Centurion Hill—500 feet high, which is the highest point in the island—and had a glorious view of the whole harbour and of the British zone on the mainland, which contains some fine hills, rising up to an altitude of 1,500 feet, with rich valleys intervening.

RAILWAY COMMUNICATION

Mr. Balfour, unasked by Germany, telegraphed the German Government when we took Wei-hai-Wei that we had no intention of connecting this place by railway with the province of Shantung. I characterised this as a fatuous act, whereupon Mr. Balfour retorted that the construction of a railway from Wei-hai-Wei into the interior of Shantung was a physical impossibility. I wished the other day

when at Wei-hai-Wei that I had had Mr. Balfour with me and been able to show him that a railway could be made to connect Wei-hai-Wei with Chefoo, a distance of sixty miles, without having to surmount any rising ground of an elevation of more than 100 feet. The fact is, that the Britishers out here are perfectly prepared to find the money to build a light railway at once, but the pledge that Mr. Balfour gave to Germany prevents it.

The harbour at Chefoo is very exposed, and often ships can neither load nor unload for days together, whereas, on the other hand, the splendidly sheltered anchorage of the great Wei-hai-Wei harbour would allow work to proceed even in the roughest weather.

POSSIBILITIES OF TRADE

The Province of Shantung is well populated. In addition to the traffic that would be diverted from Chefoo to Wei-hai-Wei, there is room for an enormous development of trade with the interior of the province, and at least two other railways could be built into the interior in other directions to tap this trade without encountering serious engineering difficulties.

Were it not for the bungling of Her Majesty's Government, Wei-hai-Wei might have become an important commercial port, and the revenues thus derived would have justified all necessary expenditure, requisite both from a commercial and a naval standpoint. The statement of Her Majesty's Government that Wei-hai-Wei could not be made a commercial port is quite contrary to the fact, and it

only shows the loss and disadvantage of having our vast commercial interests in the hands of so neglectful a Government.

TRANSFER OF WEI-HAI-WEI TO GERMANY

Having debarred ourselves from making Wei-hai-Wei into a commercial port, I am still of the opinion, which I expressed in the House of Commons, that the sooner we hand it over to the Germans the better, and allow them to construct a railway to connect it with Chefoo.

Of course, we should in making this arrangement obtain a definite and binding undertaking from the German Government that British trade should enjoy equal rights and privileges with German trade throughout their sphere of influence in China. As a further condition of our handing over Wei-hai-Wei to them, it would be necessary to have an acknowledgment of similar preferential rights and privileges in our favour in the Yang-tsze basin to those they enjoy in Shantung, and an understanding that we should have their support in taking a suitable second naval base at or near the mouth of the Yang-tsze River in place of Wei-hai-Wei.

Captain Gaunt went on board H.M.S. 'Plover' to see me off, and Captain Bailey also came to say 'good-bye.' The weather was perfect, and we had a most delightful passage back to Chefoo. The 'Plover' was bringing up the mail to Chefoo for despatch to England. When on duty of this sort she only steams eight knots an hour, with an ex-

penditure of coal of about one ton for every thirty miles steamed in moderate or fine weather. They use Welsh coal on the 'Plover' and our other ships of war, and English north country coal for the dredger in Wei-hai-Wei harbour.

The brass fittings on board the 'Plover' were like a looking-glass; the guns and everything on board were spotless. Captain Cowper was very kind in explaining the mechanism of the guns, and in giving me other interesting information.

We anchored off Chefoo about 5 P.M., and the captain sent me ashore in his gig, afterwards joining me at dinner at the British Consul's.

I am now waiting for a chance to get to Port Arthur. There are rumours of plague, typhoid, and dysentery raging in the place, and the steamer that goes there every other day has been stopped by the Russian Government for some reason of their own. It therefore remains to be seen whether I shall not be prevented paying my intended visit to the place which, of all others, has been the most heard of in connection with recent events in the Far East.

CHAPTER V

A VISIT TO PORT ARTHUR

I was not disappointed of my visit to the key of the situation in North China, viz. Port Arthur. After a delay of two days I got a passage on one of the China Merchant Co.'s steamers, the 'Kwangchi,' of about 400 tons. The vessel had no cargo on board, and we had a terrible pitching on the passage over the eighty-five miles of the Gulf of Pechili, which stretches from Chefoo to Port Arthur. The journey occupied ten hours instead of eight, in consequence of the bad weather.

SEIZURE BY RUSSIA

It will be remembered that until this great fortress was seized by Russia in 1898, we had, under treaty with China, the right to send our ships of war there whenever we desired to do so, and to enjoy equal rights and privileges with the Russians. At the close of the Chino-Japanese War, Russia, France, and Germany compelled Japan to evacuate Port Arthur, which she had captured. Russia's objection was that if allowed to remain there Japan would be a constant menace to the Government at

Pekin, and yet within two years she seized Port Arthur herself. At the time when Russia took possession (March 1898) she had only eleven fighting ships on this coast, whilst we had a magnificent force of twenty-four lying in the Gulf of Pechili, close to Port Arthur, as every one supposed for the purpose of upholding British rights. I have it on the highest authority that had England then expressed a firm determination to maintain her rights equally with Russia in Port Arthur, that nation would have withdrawn her ships without firing a shot. Nothing astonished the Russians so much as the withdrawal of our ships from Port Arthur in response to their protest, and that they should have been allowed by us to enter into possession of the prize of the Far East, in a naval and military sense without opposition. What our Government should have done was to have kept our ships of war at Port Arthur in accordance with our treaty rights, and opened up friendly negotiations with Russia with the view of coming to a fair and equitable understanding in regard to the whole situation in China.

PORT ARTHUR

The coast to the right and left of the entrance to Port Arthur is a series of cliffs and bold hills up to about 400 feet high. On the summit of each hill is a strong fort, armed with heavy guns. There is only one entrance, which is not more than 300 yards wide, with a deep-water channel of about 200 yards. On the right, the Gold Mountain rises almost per-

pendicularly 400 feet, and is surmounted by an enormous fort. The bluff on the western side of the entrance is also covered by formidable batteries. Inside the bay, facing the entrance, there is a further powerful battery, with six heavy disappearing guns.

On anchoring, we were boarded by Russian officials, who declined to allow any European passengers to disembark, on the ground that the medical officer at Chefoo had omitted to enter them in the ship's papers. I thereupon produced my letter of introduction from Mons. de Giers to the Governor of Port Arthur, and stated that I had come for the purpose of visiting him, and wished to pay my respects to His Excellency without delay. This worked like magic. The medical officer returned on shore instantly to report, and within a very few minutes the harbour master arrived in a beautiful steam launch, which the Admiral had placed at my disposal during my visit to Port Arthur. He said, as far as I was concerned, a mistake had been made, and was full of apologies for the slight detention which had taken place. The other European passengers, however, were prevented from disembarking for some considerable time.

On landing I went direct to the residence of General Sorbotutch, the governor, who spoke English perfectly. He gave me a courteous welcome to Port Arthur, remarking that he had been advised of my intended visit by Mons. de Giers; also, that the Russian Consul at Chefoo had wired him that I

had left for Port Arthur. He promised every facility for seeing Port Arthur and the neighbourhood. Within an hour he returned my call on board, accompanied by his aide-de-camp, Lieut. Peresvett Sultan, who was to show me round the place.

WEST PORT LAGOON

We first visited, by steam launch, a large lagoon known as the West Port, which is separated from the deep-water portion of Port Arthur by a very narrow sandbank. This lagoon has a narrow channel, with 2½ to 5 fathoms of water, and a large area from ¼ to ½ fathom deep. It can be cheaply dredged, and has no current to cause it to silt up.

A deep-water area of one square mile can thus be made. It is surrounded by fine hills. At the south end of this there is a low-lying stretch of country about 1½ miles across, leading through to the sea, a mile to the west of the present entrance into Port Arthur. It is contemplated ultimately to cut a channel to the sea through this, in order to have an independent entrance into the commercial part of the port. The weather was perfect—bright sunshine, and cool fresh breezes. The contrast between the new Russian launch—in which we rapidly proceeded from one point to another—and the old out-of-date launch of the British Commissioner at Wei-hai-Wei was most marked.

It is decided by the Government of St. Petersburg that the commercial port in connection with Port Arthur shall be situated on the north shore

of the West Port lagoon—a site in close proximity to the terminus of the branch line which is already constructed to connect Port Arthur with the Russian-Manchurian Railway, which has its principal terminus at the Port of Talienwan.

By this, however, it is not intended that it shall be an open port or a treaty port, but only a port through which commerce needed in connection with the Russian naval and military forces at Port Arthur shall be carried on under Russian control.

We next took a carriage, which was awaiting us, and drove round the town and its vicinity. New buildings are being erected everywhere, including extensive barracks and officers' quarters.

Behind Port Arthur the country is also hilly, and every hilltop is bristling with fortifications, guns being mounted in all directions.

The deep water inside the entrance is limited in extent, one basin being 200 × 400 yards with a depth of 5¼ to 5½ fathoms, and a second basin 100 × 200 with 5½ to 6½ fathoms. In addition to this there is a basin known as East Port, which has been artificially constructed, with a depth of about six fathoms, and is capable of holding several ships of war. It is in connection with this that the Chinese built the valuable dry dock which came into the hands of the Russians when they took the place. They have largely increased its size and have extensive repairing and machine shops adjacent to it. Close by the East Port basin is a sheet of shallow fresh water, which can be easily converted into an additional dock.

STOPPED OUTSIDE THE RUSSIAN FORTS

We left the carriage at the base of the Gold Mountain and climbed it by a winding road up which there runs a tramway used to convey water and supplies to the fort. We proceeded without interruption until we had passed two or three guns, when we were challenged by a sentry. Lieut. Sultan suddenly discovered that he had forgotten his pass, and was very sorry that we should, therefore, not be able to proceed further. How far this omission was intentional or otherwise I won't express an opinion. However, the result was that I did not manage to get inside their fortifications.

There had been rumours of the seizure of Massampo on the Korean coast by Russia; that this had been followed by the mobilisation of the Japanese forces, and that war was imminent between Japan and Russia. I saw, however, no sign of any activity at Port Arthur which would indicate that these rumours were true. I noticed also that their stocks of coal were exceedingly low. The place was, however, full of soldiers and sailors. Russia has 40,000 troops at Talienwan and Port Arthur.

Mr. A. Bostelman, manager of the Chinese Eastern Railway Company's Marine Department, called upon me. He informed me that the railway between Port Arthur and Talienwan, also up north as far as Mukden—some 300 miles in all—will be open in two months. The permanent bridges, however, will not be completed for some time. He

states that in connection with his steamer department he has at present no fewer than seven ships under construction in England.

I was sorry to find that the trade at Port Arthur is practically all done by Americans and Germans, and that the British have hardly had a look in so far.

In the evening I dined with General Soubotitch. His wife and Lieutenant Sultan joined us at dinner. We had a most interesting conversation—the General expressed liberal and enlightened views. He said that he must admit that England's policy had largely failed in China recently. He recognises that the French have lost ground both as regards influence and the respect felt towards them by other nations over the Dreyfus case, and otherwise during the last two or three years. General Soubotitch stated he was very desirous that I should remain two more days at Port Arthur, promising that he would give me a special permit to visit any of the forts which I might desire to see, and also would make special arrangements to have me conveyed by steam launch to Talienwan, where I would be shown everything. I much regretted that the uncertainty of finding a steamer to get me down to Shanghai in time to join Mr. Archibald Little in our intended trip up the Yang-tsze prevented my accepting this offer.

RUSSIAN DESIGNS AND BRITISH INACTION

During the day that I had spent there I had obtained a good idea of the town and harbour and of

the country in close proximity to Port Arthur. I had also seen quite sufficient of the fortifications to show me conclusively that the Russians have already made the place practically impregnable, and are now in a position to defend it against all comers. It would be interesting to visit their forts, but not being a military man, my opinion in regard to the construction of their fortifications and the character of the guns would have been practically valueless.

Amongst the drawbacks of Port Arthur is the absence of good water. They have water, but it is of a very indifferent quality, and insufficient in quantity, and, as at Wei-hai-Wei, the bulk of the water they use is condensed. The country at and around Port Arthur is also destitute of trees, and is very barren in appearance.

The Chinese town was in a filthy condition—it is no wonder that disease is rife. Our steamer had expected to bring back many Chinese coolies anxious to get away from Russian employment, but none turned up. It was believed that this was due to the Russians preventing their leaving. They are worked in gangs under Russian soldiers, and I am afraid are often subjected to brutal treatment. I did not see any evidence of this myself, but I am assured by those who are in a position to know that the poor Chinese find the Russians very hard taskmasters, and that their labour cannot altogether be considered free.

General Soubotitch undertook to get and send me some photographs of Port Arthur and Talienwan.

There is at present little to see at the latter place except the bay. It has an entrance about five miles wide, and the inside area of the bay opposite this entrance is about six miles square, with water $5\frac{1}{4}$ to 8 fathoms in depth. It is open and exposed to the south only. Inside, however, and sheltered by a promontory, is another bay known as Victoria Bay, in which there is a depth of water of from 4 to $4\frac{3}{4}$ fathoms over an area of two square miles. This it is proposed shall be the commercial port.

The conviction forced upon me by what I saw at Port Arthur and Newchwang is that Russia has a settled determination not only to remain at Port Arthur but ultimately to annex at least the North of China. On the other hand, the impression created on my mind at Wei-hai-Wei was that our occupation could hardly be regarded as serious, and might be ended any day. Unfortunately, our withdrawal would be regarded as further evidence of our weakness, and would be another blow to our already shattered prestige in this part of the world, because when we occupied it we made the stupid and undiplomatic declaration that we intended to remain at Wei-hai-Wei as long as Russia remained at Port Arthur. If the Government did not mean business they should have left Wei-hai-Wei alone altogether, and I have always held that they ought to have occupied a place at or near the mouth of the Yang-tsze River, where our trade interests are so predominant, instead of taking Wei-hai-Wei.

CHAPTER VI

AMERICAN AND JAPANESE TRADE COMPETITION

Monday, August 11.—I arrived at Chefoo from Port Arthur at 7 A.M. There was no steamer going to Kiao-Chau. I went to an afternoon picnic on a hill about four miles out of Chefoo, known as the 'Pinnacle,' 1,311 feet high. We were carried in chairs to the foot of the hill, which we climbed. The view was most extensive, embracing not only Chefoo Harbour, and the rich plains studded with populous villages stretching right into the interior behind Chefoo, but also similar plains as far as the eye could reach in the direction of Wei-hai-Wei, over which Mr. Balfour's 'physically impossible' railway could readily be made. On the way I saw a multitude of threshing floors made of mud which had dried as hard as cement. On these, piles of the ears of the millet (kaoliang) were being beaten with flails. They were also winnowing the grain by throwing shovelfuls high in the air so that the wind might blow away the chaff and the corn be left in a heap behind.

I slept at the family hotel right on the edge of the sea, one and a half miles over the beach from

Chefoo. In the morning, looking out upon the splendid buildings of the China Inland Mission, with a large vineyard capping the summit of a hill, it was difficult to imagine that I was in China.

CHINA INLAND MISSION

I visited the China Inland Mission schools next morning and found both boys and girls hard at work —they begin lessons at 7 A.M. There is a high school both for boys and girls, also a preparatory school with a total of nearly 200 scholars. The children of missionaries are educated free, and the schools are also open to the children of European residents in China on payment of reasonable fees. The majority of the children remain at school during the holidays, as this is one of the healthiest places in China, and the distance that they would have to travel home makes it impossible for them to be with their parents during the vacations. They have two sanatoriums on the Compound for sick missionaries.

The China Inland Mission has nearly 800 missionaries at work in China, and on the whole they consider they are doing successful work. They have over 200 stations, but are more largely engaged in travelling about in the interior of China doing evangelistic work. This Mission, in contradistinction to all others, is inter-denominational and international, which appears to me to be a great advantage. The Mission includes men of different denominations. Amongst them are members of the Church of England, Baptists, Wesleyans, and Presby-

terians. They aim at teaching simply the broad principles of Christianity, and those who work in connection with the Mission sign their acquiescence in a few main points in the matter of creed, to which all members of Evangelical churches can readily assent. Churchmen are, however, appointed to work in one particular district and the Baptists in another, and if they leave their station they are followed, if possible, by a man of the same religious denomination. This great work was, as is well known, founded by the Rev. Hudson Taylor. Many men of wealth have devoted both their lives and their money to this Mission.

TRADE OF CHEFOO

The total value of the trade of Chefoo in 1897 was over three million pounds sterling, and out of 25,385,301 total tonnage of shipping entered and cleared in the same year, 13,027,559 was British.

I am sorry to say that British trade in North China is declining, and American and Japanese trade is increasing by leaps and bounds. Eight-elevenths of the trade of Chefoo is done by the United States of America and Japan, and only three-elevenths by England and the rest of the world. Manchester can no longer compete with the United States of America in the importation of drills, jeans, and sheetings, owing to the low prices at which the latter country can land this class of goods in China. Freights from New York are lower than from Liverpool, and the goods pass through fewer hands in

America. Prices are also influenced by the fact that while American manufacturers are using every effort to secure the market here, Manchester has more orders at present than can be immediately executed, and the large demand from India keeps the mills fully occupied.

America does not yet compete with Great Britain in finer makes.

In regard to tin plates, on which the Americans put a heavy protective duty against their admission into America, and thus succeeded in establishing works to provide for their own requirements, I find that they have been able also to increase their exports of tin plates from 4,188,000 pounds in 1896 to 14,934,133 pounds in 1898. These are notes of warning to English manufacturers which ought not to be ignored, as they show that unless our works are absolutely up to date, we shall be left behind in the race. The fact that in 1895 Great Britain sold five times as much as America, while in 1898 she sold only twice as much, shows how rapidly our kinsmen across the Atlantic are invading a market in which we previously enjoyed supremacy. One reason why America is able to wrest our trade from us is the superiority of their Bureau of Foreign Commerce. They issue daily, monthly, and yearly consular reports containing full information as to openings for trade and the classes of goods required all over the world. These reports are printed within a few days after being received, and supplied to all applicants free; whilst

in England months are often allowed to pass before a report is issued, and then it is only to be had by paying for it. Their consul at Chefoo, where they have made such rapid strides, devotes himself morning, noon, and night to promoting the extension of American trade with his district. On the other hand, too many of the British consuls seem to consider it no part of their business to assist British traders.

MY CHINESE SECRETARY

Mr. Bourne, our acting consul at Shanghai, sent me up a Chinaman who had been educated at King's College, London, and graduated at an American university, to act as secretary and interpreter during my North China trip. He was instructed to meet me on arrival of the Korean steamer at Chefoo; but, though he reached the place the day before, and reported himself to Messrs. Butterfield & Swire, he was neither seen nor heard of again up to the time of my departure for Newchwang. On my return to Chefoo he was sent for, and in explanation of his failure to meet me as instructed, he said that he thought a gentleman would not care to be called upon by his private secretary until after tiffin, and that he had assumed that I would stay at least a day or two in Chefoo. I also found that this grandee had his servant travelling with him—at my expense. On arrival at Tientsin, when I told him to look after the transportation of my baggage to the hotel, he replied that he had himself to settle at his

hotel, and that he had not understood that he had been engaged to do servant's work. He was, therefore, much too grand a gentleman for my purpose, and as I found that high political personages, such as Prince Ching and Li-Hung-Chang, object to the employment of an unknown interpreter in interviews, I decided to send him back to Shanghai. He was unable to write shorthand, and was, therefore, useless to me for secretarial work. I hope he is not a fair example of a Europeanised Chinaman. He spoke English admirably, but his conceit and vanity were unbounded.

STRANDED AT CHEFOO

I found that the first steamer leaving Chefoo for Shanghai which would call at Kiao-Chau would not leave for four days, a delay I could ill afford.

I telegraphed to Messrs. Jardine, Matheson, & Co., of Shanghai, asking that their steamer, the 'Lien Shing,' which was leaving that day direct for Shanghai, might call at Kiao-Chau for four hours, in order that I might see Germany's latest acquisition. They most kindly consented, and I left at 4 P.M. bound for Kiao-Chau. The British consul, Dr. Molyneux, and Mr. Donelly came on board to see me off.

VISIT TO KIAO-CHAU

My visit to Kiao-Chau was made on September 4 under the most favourable circumstances. This place is on the east coast of the great Province of

Shantung, containing a population of 37 millions, and was seized by the Germans in 1897, as reparation for the murder of two German missionaries. They are making it the base of operations designed to extend their influence throughout Shantung, and possibly far beyond.

About 17 miles off we passed right under the splendid ragged-edged mountain Loshar, which looked grand as it rose almost sheer out of the sea 3,530 feet above the water. This mountain is included in territory leased by Germany, and, German-like, they have already a mountain hotel near the summit as a sanatorium.

Eleven miles to the west of Kiao-Chau is another fine mountain, Tamoshan, 2,249 feet, and all round are rugged hills forming the background of low, undulating, well-cultivated land.

The entrance to the magnificent Bay, which covers 140 square miles at high water, is only $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles across. On the left is Cape Evelyn, 516 feet high, whilst on the right is a low-lying promontory.

Chin-tau, the present port, is outside this entrance, and exposed to easterly gales. The Germans intend to transfer the port to the opposite side of the promontory—that is, inside the large bay; and they are already busily engaged in constructing two breakwaters at a cost of 250,000*l.*, so as to have a large area of deep water in which vessels may anchor without being exposed to gales which may sweep across the inland bay.

Lord Charles Beresford, in his brief visit to Kiao-Chau, does not appear to have ascertained what the Germans really intended to do, as he speaks of its being necessary that a breakwater should be constructed to protect shipping from easterly gales, evidently assuming that the port would remain where it is at present.

Kiao-Chau Bay is one of the best-sheltered harbours on the east coast of China, and has extensive, perfectly land-locked deep-water anchorage independent of the new port which is being made. The general appearance of the country around is barren, and there is scarcely a tree to be seen; but the Germans have a special forestry department actively engaged in ascertaining the kind of trees which will grow the best, and in planting large areas.

Substantial stone buildings are being rapidly erected, and there is already a large first-class hotel.

On anchoring some distance from the shore, we soon saw a steam launch rapidly ploughing her way across the bay towards us. It was the launch of his Excellency Captain Jaeschke, the Governor of the port, and had on board his aide-de-camp, Baron Lilieneron, who is a captain in the German Army. He had come to receive me on behalf of the Governor, and we immediately proceeded to Government House, where I found they had delayed tiffin an hour for my benefit. The Governor had been advised by Baron von Ketteler, the German Minister

at Pekin, and also by the German Consul at Chefoo, of my intended visit. He expressed himself specially pleased to welcome me as a member of the British House of Commons, adding that I was the first who had thus honoured him with a visit, and that even no member of the German Parliament had yet been to Kiao-Chau. He was strongly of opinion that it would be of the greatest possible advantage if they would come and see for themselves the possibilities of the Far East.

Accompanied by the Governor's aide-de-camp and Dr. Schrameier, the Civil Commissioner, I started on horseback to explore the whole district. We first of all ascended Bismarckberg, 450 feet, from which we had a perfect view, including the large bay, the sea coast stretching away east and west, and the country in the background. In the course of our three hours' ride we saw practically everything. We visited the new harbour works and the construction works in connection with the railway which the Germans are building to Tsinan, in the province of Shantung, a place about 300 miles inland from Kiao-Chau. This railway, they anticipate, will be completed in 2½ years. It will be connected at Tsinan with the railway which is to be built from Tientsin to Chinkiang jointly by the Germans and British. The Chinese workmen simply swarmed like bees on both harbour and railway works. The Germans are employing fully 5,000, and, contrary to the experience of the Russians, their

trouble lies in the multitude of applications for work which they have to refuse. There are 1,400 German soldiers at Kiao-Chau, and, following our example at Wei-hai-Wei, they intend to enrol Chinese soldiers, starting with 120 men.

At Port Arthur the Russians have built their forts and mounted guns before they have made the place. The Germans, however, say that they are going to create the town of Kiao-Chau first, and will then construct its defences. They have a few guns mounted.

TRADE OF KIAO-CHAU

Both the Governor and the Civil Commissioner strongly desired that I should make it known at home that Kiao-Chau will be open to British trade on precisely the same terms and conditions as to German, and just in the same way as British possessions are equally open to German and British traders.

Lord Charles Beresford anticipated that the regulations as to land would hinder the development of Kiao-Chau. I made careful inquiries as to this, and take an opposite view. The regulations adopted by the Germans might with great advantage be put in force at places in our own Empire where new towns are being created. They are designed to prevent land speculators buying up huge blocks of land and artificially running up prices. The Government own the land, and are prepared to sell it at a very reasonable price to *bonâ-*

tide purchasers. In order to secure a reasonable share in the increase in value which may take place through works of public utility carried out at the cost of the State, the Government will claim one-third of the profit that may be made in any resale of land, excluding, however, any buildings that may be on the land. In order to safeguard themselves against fraud, they reserve the right to take over any piece of land when the purchaser comes to register it—at the price stipulated in the contract. Six per cent. is charged on the assessed value of the land as a land tax, and it is to be reassessed every 25 years. The regulations, it will be seen, are the practical embodiment, to some extent, of the just principle of the taxation of ground values which many of us consider should be put in force at home.

Captain Jaeschke invited me to dine with him, but having only asked permission to detain the steamer four hours, I was unable to have that pleasure. The Civil Commissioner and Baron Liliencron came on board to see me off, and the Governor also came out to the steamer to say 'Good-bye.' I had had a most satisfactory visit, and can heartily congratulate the Germans on the qualities of courage, energy, and enterprise which they are displaying in the great Empire of China. They show that they appreciate the enormous possibilities which China offers for the development of trade, and put to shame our Government, who are still pursuing a policy of drift and are failing to take adequate measures to maintain or advance British commercial interests.

KIAO-CHAU TO SHANGHAI

We had a pleasant passage of about forty hours from Kiao-Chau to Shanghai. We entered the Whangpoo River at the Woosung Forts, about twelve miles from Shanghai. These forts were at that time dismantled. To go up the Yangtsze it is necessary to return to Woosung, and then take the channel northwards which leads into the Yangtsze. The channel southwards is taken when bound for Hong Kong. There are on both sides of the river absolutely flat fertile plains, on which two or even three crops a year are grown. The country is fairly well timbered, and the trees looked quite fresh and green.

SHANGHAI

On the right-hand side of the river are situated the settlements originally obtained by America and England which they agreed to convert into an international settlement. The area of this, with the addition recently made, is about five miles by three.

On the Bund facing the river the hongs and other buildings are almost palatial: avenues of trees add much to the attractive appearance of the city on its river front.

The French have their extensive settlement beyond the international settlement. In this they claim absolute jurisdiction, though they enjoy an equal right to utilise the international settlement with other nations. They are seeking to obtain a further concession. The report that this attempt on

their part had been defeated by the joint action of America and England is not correct. They are still pressing their demand, though only seventeen Frenchmen live in their present settlement.

On the left bank of the river as we came up we passed more than one shipbuilding yard with dry docks and repairing shops, also several petroleum godowns. On the right bank were cotton and other factories, also godowns and wharves.

As we drew near to Shanghai the river was full of shipping, which, together with the works, mills, and buildings lining both banks, conveyed to one some idea of the immense business carried on in the city which is known as the capital of the Far East.

I noticed in the river an Italian cruiser, an English and a Japanese gunboat, also a beautiful Chinese Customs revenue cruiser.

On arriving at the wharf Mr. Morris, from Messrs. Jardine, Matheson, & Co., boarded the steamer and handed me an invitation to put up at their hong. In the course of the day I called upon Mr. Archibald Little, who had arrived the day before, in order to discuss with him the necessary arrangements in connection with our projected expedition 1,600 miles up the Yangtsze River to Chung King. I then went to the British Consulate and saw Mr. F. S. Bourne, the acting Consul here, who promised me all the assistance in his power to facilitate my journey. In the evening Mr. Inglis drove me round the best residential parts of

Shanghai and out to the Country Club, a fine building with extensive grounds attached, in which there are fifteen lawn tennis courts. The Club grounds are well timbered and kept in excellent order. The membership of the Club includes ladies as well as men, and it is a pleasant centre of Shanghai social life.

The large number of handsome residences which we saw gave evidence of the great commercial prosperity of Shanghai, and would be an eye-opener to those at home who have but a faint idea of the importance of the Far East.

BARNSLEY BOBBINS

Practically all the Chinese cotton mills use Barnsley bobbins, over 12,000 gross having been ordered this year.

Owing to failure of the cotton crop last year the cotton mills have been running half-time only, or the orders would have been larger. The European mills buy their bobbins in London, and they possibly have some portion of their requirements supplied from Barnsley.

THE INLAND WATERWAYS OF CHINA

On Monday, September 18, I left with three Shanghai gentlemen in two European houseboats, towed by a steam launch, on an expedition through the inland waterways south of Shanghai. We started in a downpour of rain which never ceased for thirty-six hours, but we were quite watertight and

luxuriously comfortable in our floating houses—with cooks and servants on board as on shore.

The first part of our route lay up the Whang-poo River, and then along the Grand Canal for some distance. The Grand Canal is one of the most wonderful works in China. It runs 650 miles from Pekin to Hang Chow, and was constructed between the seventh and tenth centuries. It is a tribute to the possession of courage, enterprise, and perseverance by the Chinese of those days. It has been of incalculable value in enabling the trade of the richest portion of China to be carried on by the cheapest mode of transit next to railways.

CHINESE BRIDGES

The Grand Canal and the other creeks up which we steamed were crossed by a succession of handsome stone bridges—solid, well-built structures, doing credit to both workmen and engineers. The heavy rains had made the water rise considerably in the creeks, and it soon became doubtful whether our craft could pass under the bridges. Over and over again we just scraped through, even after taking down the deck houses. It was quite exciting work, and we all had a turn at it. We reaped our reward when dinner time came and good digestion waited on appetite. At last we were face to face with a bridge through which the launch would not pass, so leaving her behind our men propelled the house-boats by means of huge oars, called yulohs, five or six men working each of them. We were passing

through a densely populated part of China. The people swarmed out to see the 'foreign devils' at every village and town: some stood gazing with mouths wide open, or, pointing to us, made remarks not always of the most complimentary character; but the majority were always ready to acknowledge a friendly smile by smiling back. As a rule the crowds were orderly and treated us with quite as much, if not with more courtesy and civility than would often be shown to Chinamen in England. From a Chinaman's standpoint, we are both in dress and appearance the most amusing and ridiculous-looking specimens of humanity. The whole of the 150 miles down to Hai-ning there were rich alluvial plains, growing two and even three crops a year. A large area is covered with mulberry trees which provide food for the silkworms. Cotton and all kinds of cereals, beans, sweet potatoes, and many other crops are largely grown. The luxuriant growth greatly added to the scenery, which in many of the creeks, where trees, huge palm-like reeds, ferns, and flowering shrubs overhung the water on each side, was very beautiful. A weed resembling maidenhair fern covered the surface of the water in many places, and where this was covered with the purple flowers shed from the shrubs above the effect was most charming. I should have liked to be able to transport a few square feet untouched as a dinner-table decoration. We saw serpents swimming across the streams, and in many places crowds of buffaloes were cooling themselves up to the neck in the water.

CORMORANT FISHING

It was very novel and amusing to see flocks of trained cormorants being used for fishing. These birds are like large ducks, except their bills, which are so constructed as to enable them to snatch fish out of the water with the greatest rapidity and ease. A string is tied to the foot of each bird and held by the man in the boat. He thus directs the operations of perhaps twenty birds at once. They enter the water and dive for fish, and when the man in charge sees a bird has secured one he draws it into the boat and takes it out of its bill. A ring or cord is temporarily put round the neck of the cormorant to prevent him swallowing the fish. At intervals the birds are taken on board to rest, and they are encouraged in their work by receiving ample meals of fish.

BIRDS, GAME, AND INSECTS.

We did not see a great variety of birds, but the lovely kingfisher abounded. There is excellent shooting in some districts, pheasant, snipe, wild geese, ducks, swans, woodcock, and teal, also deer and hares. It is a curious fact that there are no rabbits in China. Insect life is far too prolific for one's comfort. The mosquitoes came in swarms and did vastly more bloodletting for me than I desired. Lovely fireflies lighted up bush and bank on every side, whilst the tremendous noise made by multitudes of frogs, grasshoppers, and other insects all through the night was perfectly wonderful.

CHINESE RIVER LIFE

We had an insight into Chinese river life. Millions of families have no house on shore, but live the year round, and indeed all their lives, in their boats. On our short trip we saw thousands of these floating homes—if homes they can by any stretch of the imagination be called. The Chinese occupants, however, look well nourished, are well dressed in their own style, and seem a merry, happy, and contented people. No doubt their life on the water is much healthier than it would be in insanitary dwellings on shore.

Amongst other boats are those known as despatch boats. They draw only two or three inches of water, and are propelled at great speed by a man seated in the stern, who works one oar with his feet most cleverly, and at the same time sculls with his arms and manages to keep a sun umbrella aloft over his head.

We met also trains of Chinese houseboats, eight or ten in a line, drawn by powerful steam launches at a high speed. They have a regular service between Shanghai and Hang Chow, which affords a comfortable and cheap mode of transit.

In the towns through which we passed many picturesque wooden houses were built on solid stone foundations rising out of the water, and were provided with steps at which to land, very much the same as at Venice. Kashing, Hai-ning, and other places are enclosed by huge walls with turreted

battlements, and the inhabitants seemed almost to belong to another world.

GREAT SEA WALL

Our destination was Hai-ning, a city on the Tsien-tang River, about fifteen miles from the sea. From Hang Chow, past Hai-ning, to Woosung, a distance of 140 miles, there stretches a huge wall about thirty feet high, built of rocks three to four feet long, clamped together with iron to keep out the sea, the country inland being on a lower level.

We had come to see what is known as the 'Bore' at full moon when the tide is the highest. The estuary of the river is of funnel shape, and as the swollen river rushes down its comparatively narrow channel on the ebb tide it dams back and prevents for a time the inflow of the rising tide. This is banked up, as it were, until the pent-up wall of solid water outside becomes irresistible, and surges right over the top of the river at the rate of fifteen or sixteen miles an hour. It is a mass of water two miles across and from 6 feet to 19 feet high. The roar of it can be heard miles away. It is a grand and impressive spectacle.

AN EX-MISSIONARY AT THE WHEEL

An ex-missionary volunteered to tow us with his steam launch back to where we had left ours. We sped along merrily for a time with the missionary at the wheel, but we noticed he took the bridges in

a reckless fashion. Very soon he dashed through one, bumping our houseboat against the solid stone buttress so violently that the contents of our dinner table were strewn over the cabin and a good deal of glass and crockery was smashed to atoms. Our houseboat was also considerably damaged. We resumed the slower but safer yuloh. We reached our launch before dark, and all night we glided by lovely moonlight along the most charming waterways. Early morning found us rolling and tossing on the great Whang-poo River, a strong wind against the tide causing quite a sea.

YANGTSZE EXPEDITION

The next day I was hard at work laying in stores and other requisites for my 1,600 miles expedition up the great Yangtsze River. I had to buy bedding and furniture, cutlery, glass, crockery, cooking stove, pots, and pans, in addition to food; so it was quite an undertaking.

SILK FILATURE WORKS

I managed to make the time for a visit to the filature works of Jardine, Matheson, & Co. They buy silk cocoons up country in May. These are heated in ovens to kill the worm inside, and then brought down to Shanghai. The cocoons are then sorted according to quality, and after being soaked in boiling water the silk is unwound by machinery

from five cocoons at once—the five almost invisible threads being woven into one thread in the process. Girls overlook this in the most skilful manner—replacing one cocoon by another as finished, and tying the end of the thread to the beginning of the thread unwound from the fresh cocoon in a very rapid and clever way. Nothing is wasted—the inferior parts of the cocoon are used to make common qualities of silk. The worms are eaten by the Chinese or sold as manure. The hanks of wound silk are beautifully soft, and are handled and packed with the greatest neatness and care. The Chinese very carefully preserve a sufficient supply of silkworms. The worm, if left alone, bursts the cocoon and escapes as a butterfly. They lay 2,000 to 3,000 eggs, and on the successful hatching of these depends the future supply of silkworms. These are often hatched by the Chinese on their own persons and in their beds with great ingenuity, and are reared with the utmost care. As the wee worms appear they are so fragile that they cannot be touched by hand, but are gently lifted by a mulberry leaf on to trays and fed two or three times a day with mulberry leaves cut as small as possible.

I left Shanghai on September 23, at 5 A.M., in s.s. 'Kutwo' for Nankin, this being the first stage of my intended expedition up the Yangtsze Valley to the most western province of China, Szechuan. Unfortunately, Mr. Archibald Little, who knows this region better than any other living man, was

unavoidably detained at Shanghai. I could not delay starting—as that would endanger my being at home for the opening of Parliament—so I decided to go alone. Mr. Little most kindly placed his steam launch at my disposal above Ichang.

CHAPTER VII

LOWER REACHES OF THE YANGTSZE

S.S. 'Kutwo,' September 24, 1899.—This steamer is one of the magnificent river boats of American type of which there is a daily sailing from Shanghai to Hankow, a distance of 600 miles up the Yangtsze River. She carries 2,000 tons of cargo—largely Manchester piece goods for the interior of China—and was not only full, but had to shut out cargo offered. The trade has increased so rapidly that additional steamers are urgently needed and are now in course of construction, not only by the English and Chinese, but also by the Japanese and Germans.

In three hours we were in the lower reaches of the great river—a perfect sea of muddy water. A thin line of brown, a shade deeper than that of the water, barely visible to starboard, indicated the left bank, whilst in the opposite direction the muddy waste extended to the horizon. Soon the river was lined by flat, fertile, well-wooded plains, and was contracted to a width varying in the course of the day from 1½ to 2½ miles. A multitude of junks and boats with their picturesque sails and interesting

Chinese occupants greatly relieved the monotony of the scenery, and as we glided on, basking in glorious sunshine, far away from the rush and crush of modern civilised life, one felt at peace with all the world.

Ninety-six miles from Shanghai we passed Kiangyin, where forts, with heavy guns, have been constructed on the low-lying hills on the left bank of the river.

This plain commands the river, and we ought to have taken it by arrangement with the Chinese, who would have welcomed our intervention, in place of Wei-hai-Wei.

CHINKIANG

This morning at 3 A.M. we reached Chinkiang, a city with 140,000 inhabitants. It is surrounded by well-wooded country and has a fine range of hills a little way inland, also lower hills on the edge of the river. Golden Island looked picturesque, rising up from the water from two to three hundred feet surmounted by a pagoda. Silver Island in the river just below Chinkiang is prettily wooded.

Chinkiang is a distributing centre for the provinces of Kiang-si, Kiang-suh, Anhui, Shantung, and Honan. Its trade now amounts to about $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions sterling a year. The entrance to the Grand Canal is close by, and this, coupled with numerous other waterways and the railway which is to be jointly constructed by the Germans and English from Tientsin to Chinkiang, gives promise of still

greater prosperity in the future. There are a number of European houses, and the Chinese city has existed for 2,000 years. The insistence on the carrying out in its entirety of the agreement in regard to the opening to trade of the inland waterways of China, and the securing of the right for traders, as well as missionaries, to acquire property and reside in the interior, would cause trade to advance, to the mutual advantage of the Chinese and of the various nations trading with them.

BRITISH FLEET IN 1842

If I could have gone back in my vision to 1842, I should have seen a British fleet anchored off Chinkiang, and great would have been the contrast between those line-of-battle ships and those I saw flying the Union Jack at Wei-hai-Wei.

We left Chinkiang at 6 A.M., and at 8 passed Iching, a salt emporium from which a large district is supplied by junks under Government control. Salt is contraband, being a Government monopoly, and no other vessels are allowed to carry it.

Right up to Nankin, 200 miles from Shanghai, the river was never less than a mile wide. In many places reeds grow on the marshy banks 12 to 16 feet high. These are all cut in December and used as fuel and for the construction of roofs and fences in place of bamboos. Paper is also manufactured from the leaves. We passed districts where the rice crop had been cut and the stooks fixed several feet above the ground on triangles of bamboo to

save it from destruction by floods overflowing the river banks, but involving great trouble and labour upon the plodding, patient, industrious Chinese agriculturists. We now began to see cattle here and there—in many parts of China they are unknown.

For some distance below Nankin rich plains stretched to low hills on the left, and on the right bank a bare and higher range running up to 1,000 feet formed the background.

Fifteen miles from Nankin a straight canal reduces the distance by one-half, but only junks are allowed to use it, although there is ample room.

NANKIN

Arrived at Nankin 12.30. Mr. Aglen, Commissioner of Customs, came off to welcome me. The Viceroy, Liu-Kun-Yi, who rules Kiangsi, Anhui, and Kiangsuh Provinces, had been asked by mistake to receive me to-morrow instead of to-day, and had put off a review of the Military School on this account. When it was represented to him that I must leave early the next morning he gave me an appointment at 5 P.M., though he is old and feeble and had had a heavy day. I had my cards prepared in Chinese eight inches long by three wide—the size of your card is regulated by your public or official position—and it would not do to belittle yourself by handing in a small English card. Mr. Aglen accompanied me to interpret. We first went to the Foreign Office, where the Taotai (the official next

in importance to the Viceroy) was waiting to receive me and to conduct me to the Viceroy's yamen. We were carried in green chairs which are only used by high officials.

INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY LIU-KUN-YI

I was received with ceremony, the pathway through the courtyards leading to the Reception Hall being lined by soldiers and attendants. Liu-Kun-Yi was standing at the doorway of the last court, and greeted me with Chinese ceremonial politeness. He conducted me into the yamen and placed me on his left at a round table (contrary to the English idea, the seat to the left of the host, instead of that to the right, is the place of honour). We were served with tea, champagne, fruits, sweets, biscuits, and cigarettes. The Viceroy is one of the most powerful men in China: he holds enlightened views, and is patriotic and honest. His age and state of health prevent his actively promoting the adoption of a strong and drastic policy of reform. I found him in a state of despair and anxious only to be allowed to retire from office. He thinks any reform movement to be effectual must begin at Pekin. A strong, able, and enlightened ruler could alone lay the foundation of the regeneration of China. He considers the corrupt officialdom ought to be dealt with, but he fears it is almost an impossible task. He is very friendly to England, but cannot understand why the British Government should have allowed Russia to ride roughshod over

China, and deeply regrets that our influence and prestige have been destroyed. He would welcome concerted assistance from those nations who do not desire the partition of China in the reorganisation of her military forces, but fears the difficulties in the way of this are insurmountable. He pathetically exclaimed Russia would be sure to object, and China must obey unless the friendly Powers are prepared to assert themselves very differently from what they have hitherto done in the present crisis. Another hindrance is the lack of money. Liu-Kun-Yi spoke with great cordiality of his appreciation of the advice Lord Charles Beresford gave him last year as to reorganisation of military and naval forces, and also of his warm friendship for him. He has been a Viceroy over twenty years, and is of the highest rank. Viceroys have enormous power in China, the army and navy being created and administered by them in their different Provinces. They collect and expend all taxation, except a certain proportion sent to Pekin. Liu-Kun-Yi rules practically as a king over 66 millions of people. He can, however, be dismissed and disgraced at a moment's notice at the sweet will and pleasure of the Emperor or Empress. After an audience of three-quarters of an hour I took my leave, greatly regretting that this able and patriotic Chinaman was not thirty years younger.

I drove round the city of Nankin, which covers a considerable area. The city walls are very massive. The height varies from 30 to 50 feet, and they are so

wide as to allow free gallops on horseback on the top. Nankin was the capital of China before it was removed to Pekin.

The Taiping Rebellion, which began in 1850 and was put down by our 'Chinese Gordon,' was the work of a sect calling themselves 'God Worshippers,' Christianity being their profession, but mixed with a great deal of error. They started as the Regenerators of the Empire, and there is reason to think they were sincere. My sympathies would have been with them. They took possession of Nankin in 1853, and made it their headquarters. Afterwards they withstood a siege by the Imperialists lasting some years.

In 1861 the British Naval Squadron assembled at Nankin preparatory to an expedition of investigation further up the river.

NANKIN PAGODA

We ascended the pagoda on a hill in the city, and had a glorious view of the city and the surrounding country. The greater part of what is enclosed within the walls is not built upon, but is an undulating, well-wooded tract, with rich garden land. The city is practically encircled by hills, and it appears to be a rich, prosperous, and attractive place. There is a Tartar city, inside the other, which is mostly in ruins.

MING TOMBS

The Ming Tombs, under the Golden Pearl Mountain, where repose the remains of His Majesty Choo,

the first monarch of the Ming dynasty, I had not time to visit; I succeeded, however, in procuring a photograph.

The broad Yangtsze River is two miles away from the nearest point of the city walls, and it is five miles from the landing-place to the Viceroy's Yamên. We drove this distance over the best macadamised road I have seen in China, which was built by the last Viceroy, Chang Chih Tung. There are military and naval colleges at Nankin, under Germans and English respectively, but they do not amount to much, I fear, as regards leavening the military and naval systems of the country. Nankin boasts also of a mint, a gunpowder factory, and an arsenal, but at the last practically only antiquated jingalls are made.

Mr. Aglen's home is on an old vessel moored in the river, where he has fixed up quite comfortable quarters.

At 5.30 next morning I was on board the steamship 'Tatung,' bound for Hankow. The weather was perfect and the scenery pleasant. We passed several bluffs on the edge of the river—two of them known as East and West Pillar—and also a steep and well-wooded island. Above and below Wuhu (50 miles up from Nankin) are rich plains on both banks, on which enormous crops of rice are produced. This is shipped from Wuhu. No less than six steamers were lying there waiting to load rice, in addition to the regular boats. The Roman Catholic Church and other mission premises are the most prominent features at Wuhu. The population is 80,000, and

trade 1,200,000*l.* annually. Its proximity to waterways is certain to give it a growing trade as these become properly opened. All the afternoon we passed mountains to the south, and rich fairly timbered plains everywhere.

SPORT IN THE YANGTSZE VALLEY

There is said to be excellent shooting in many places, notably in the Wuhu district. Pheasant, duck, teal, snipe, geese, swans, and woodcock are got, also deer and hares. Amongst bags made have been 1,800 pheasants in twenty-three days, with six guns, and one man bagged 70 in one day. They are wild, and not half-tame, as in England, and are neither preserved nor reared. With regard to snipe, one gun got 102 one day and 114 another. A man also bagged 422 head of wildfowl in ten days. As in other countries, the tendency is for game to diminish. The pheasant would soon have been extinct, as they were being killed off wholesale, but this has been put a stop to by Imperial edict.

KIANGSI

Tuesday, September 26, found us in the province of Kiangsi. There were rich plains, populous villages, with stone houses on the south, backed by a fine range of hills. On the north stretched flat plains with low and very distant hills and numerous hamlets and farms. We passed the Orphan Rock, a pyramid in the river 300 feet high, with joss house and pagoda—nestling on a well-wooded summit. At

9.30 we had on our left the entrance to the enormous Poyang Lake, about which so little is yet known. There is a small town and picturesque old fort on the bluff to the left, and a modern fort on a sandhill to the right of the inlet.

KIU KIANG

We reached Kiu Kiang, 444 miles from Shanghai, about 1 P.M. It is an attractive place of over 50,000 inhabitants. The Chinese city is surrounded by grand old walls with turreted battlements, and has a good deal of timber inside. Outside is a handsome little European bund with avenues of trees facing the river. The splendid Catholic Mission premises, church and hospital, are a special feature. About 15 miles inland runs a grand broken range of mountains, 4,000 to 4,500 feet high. On one of these is a Missionary Sanatorium rejoicing in the name of Kuling.

TRADE OF KIU KIANG

The trade of Kiu Kiang is very large, amounting to over two millions a year. The principal export is black tea. If light-draught steamers and steam-launches for towing were put on the Poyang Lake and the tributary rivers, so as to allow goods to be freely conveyed by water to and from the province of Kiang-si, a rapid increase of trade would ensue. The 150 miles between Kiu Kiang and Hankow was of much the same character—rich plains, populous villages, a fair amount of wood, and here and

there hills to add to the scenic beauty. As we approached Hankow the whole country became flat, but continued most fertile. Millet, wheat, sesame seed, indigo, and other crops had largely taken the place of rice, which distinguished the Wuhu district.

I arrived at Hankow on September 27, and had a warm welcome from Mr. Cradock, of Jardine, Matheson, & Co., with whom I stayed.

Here, though 600 miles inland, the majestic Yangtsze River is over a mile wide, and some idea of the enormous quantity of water sweeping past may be got when I say that it is at present 41 ft. 7 in. above its lowest water-level. This is quite an unusual condition of affairs at the end of September, and the chance of being able to get through the Yangtsze gorges in the time at my disposal is not good. Not even a cargo junk has ventured to face the torrent above Ichang for nearly a month past. Contrary to our experience at home, rivers in China have a much greater volume of water in summer than in winter. This is due to the melting of snow and the time of their rainy seasons. There is practically no rainfall in winter. The Han River enters the Yangtsze at Hankow, and separates it from the town of Han-Yang. These two places, together with Wuchang on the opposite side of the Yangtsze to Hankow, have a united population variously estimated at from one to two millions. In approaching Hankow we had the imposing Bund on the right, with its palatial hongs, avenues of trees, and well-kept

lawns. First come the Japanese, German, French, and Russian concessions, recently acquired and only partially built up. The English concession has on it the main European settlement. The Russians and others prefer to be under British jurisdiction rather than to be harassed by the cast-iron officialism of their own nation. The French arbitrarily seized and confiscated the racecourse, which was vested in a cosmopolitan body, and no redress has been got. The Russians demanded that the title-deeds of Britishers owning land or property, which had been improperly included in their concession by the Chinese Government, should be submitted for their approval, and the English Government tamely submitted, instead of denying their right to have jurisdiction over it. The Russians rejected certain titles, including those of several pieces of land of which Messrs. Jardine, Matheson, & Co. had been in possession for thirty years, though ten years' occupation gives an effective title according to Russian law. The owners proceeded to fence it off, whereupon Russian Cossacks tore up the fence and assaulted the British overlooker.

BRITISH BLUEJACKETS TO THE FRONT

This high-handed proceeding was more than even Her Majesty's Government could submit to, and bluejackets were landed from the 'Woodlark' to protect the workmen whilst they completed the erection of the fence. At the sight of armed British sailors the Russians wisely disappeared, and have

not interfered since. This shows that the firm upholding of our just rights, and not a policy of surrender, is the best course to pursue. It is reported that the English and Russian Governments have agreed to submit the matter to arbitration. This appears to be the only rational mode of settling the dispute, and any refusal to arbitrate would have shown the Hague Peace Conference to be without practical result. It will be interesting to see the final outcome of the affair.

RECEPTION BY CHANG CHIH TUNG

September 28.—The British Consul, Mr. Hurst, had arranged for Chang Chih Tung, the Viceroy of the Provinces of Hunan and Hupeh—with over fifty-two millions of population—to receive me at his Yamên in the city of Wuchang at 10 A.M. We crossed the river by steam-launch, and were carried from the landing-place to the Yamên in green chairs preceded by soldiers to clear the track. The Chinese who crowded the picturesque narrow streets opened their mouths, gazed, and smiled with amusement at the, to them, grotesque-looking men passing through their midst. On arrival we were promptly received by the Viceroy. He is an intelligent-looking man, with bright alert eyes, a grey beard, and finger nails more than an inch long. Many Chinese of high rank grow them even longer. He wore a conical hat made of reeds, lined with scarlet. It had also a long scarlet fringe suspended from a scarlet button on the top of the hat. His

flowing garment was of violet silk, lined with blue, and from his neck were suspended numerous strings of round buttons of various colours, denoting his rank and official status. In China you keep your hat on during interviews. I had an interview lasting nearly two hours. I determined to make the Viceroy talk about the present situation in China, and led off by announcing myself as an Englishman whose policy was China for the Chinese, as opposed to partition, and added I had come all the way to China for the purpose of ascertaining from statesmen like himself how, in their opinion, this object could be best attained. He seemed doubtful and suspicious for the first half-hour—after that he conversed freely, and we had a cordial and friendly interchange of views. Chang Chih Tung is regarded as one of the most influential men in China, and, unlike the majority of Chinese officials, he is honest, patriotic, and progressive, and though he has never been outside his own country he has a wonderful grasp of the laws, government, and institutions of European nations. He agreed that if England, America, and Japan gave China their joint influence and assistance its independence could be preserved. He said small outstanding disputes could easily be settled. He admitted the Pekin-Hankow Railway Concession was a mistake in some of its conditions, but said provision was made for paying off the money and freeing the line. He denied that the concessionnaires had power to police the line by military guards, but did not contradict

my statement that Russia, France, and Germany, also the Pekin-Hankow Syndicate, had been given exclusive mining rights by the Chinese Government, which they were now refusing to the American-English Syndicate in connection with the Canton-Hankow line.

This is in contravention of the Treaty of Tientsin, under which we are to have equal privileges, immunities, and advantages to those granted to other nations. He argued that the hostile attitude of the inhabitants of Hunan made this course necessary, but thought that a compromise might be come to in regard to the portion of the line nearer to Canton. I told him that if the Chinese Government allowed the Pekin-Hankow Syndicate to construct the line from Hankow to Canton also, it would enable Russia and France to create a railway system throughout China from north to south absolutely under their own control, the independence of China would be gone and its final absorption by those Powers only a question of time.

Chang Chih Tung recognised the force of my contention, and said the position was most critical, as France was strongly pressing that the reversion of the right to construct this line—which is provided for in the Pekin-Hankow contract in the event of the American concession lapsing—should now be considered operative on account of the deadlock in the negotiations. He urged that America and England should moderate their demands; whilst I pointed out that, unless China was prepared to commit

suicide, they should be ready to make any reasonable concession to secure the Canton-Hankow line being made by Powers not desirous to bring about the break-up of China. The Viceroy asked if Jung-lu had been present at my audience with Prince Ching at Pekin, adding that he is Prime Minister and Generalissimo of the Chinese Army, and all-powerful in China at present, Prince Ching being really the leader of the Opposition.

Chang Chih Tung more than once said he had to do only with provincial, and not with imperial affairs ; that whilst he gave his opinions in a friendly way, he had no authority to interfere in the matter of railway concessions or other imperial matters. I replied that I felt sure those in authority would attach great weight to any representations His Excellency made.

He promised a red boat—*i.e.* a guard boat—from Ichang up the Yangtsze as far as his province extended, and to telegraph a request that the Governor of Szechuan would give similar assistance in that province. He also agreed to arrange for my being taken round the arsenal, the Han Yang works, and the Military College.

The interpreter through whom our conversation was carried on was first-class. The Taotai and two other officials were present, and a crowd of retainers, as usual, stood around the room and doorway. After a cordial leave-taking we returned to Hankow.

HAN YANG IRONWORKS

In the afternoon Consul Hurst and I went by steam-launch to these works, which are the only ironworks in China. They consist of two blast furnaces 65 feet high, and rolling mills producing rails, angles, bars, and plates. The plant was supplied and erected by the Tees Side Ironworks Company, Yorkshire. An enormous amount of money has been expended over them—three-quarters of a million, it is said; but they are not successful, owing to the lack of proper management and the corruption of those in power, who are feathering their own nests at the expense of the concern. Bad material has also to be contended with.

The blowing engines are only equal to working one furnace, which produces 80 tons a day, and the works turn out 120 to 150 tons of rails or other finished steel per day, but are not worked regularly. About one thousand hands are employed. I was taken around by Mr. Williamson, a Scotchman from Glasgow. The carrying of coke from the junk to the furnaces in baskets was an example of some of the primitive methods employed. The coke and coal come from Pingshan mines, 280 miles away, and cost 36*s.* and 18*s.* per ton respectively, delivered. The iron ore is from the Wong Chi Tong mines, 76 miles off, and costs 6*s.* 3*d.* per ton. It contains 65 per cent. of iron, but the phosphorus and other impurities render it unfit for making steel. The coke has 20 per cent. of ash and too much phosphorus and

sulphur. They also bring manganiferous ore all the way from Szechuan as a mixture: this unfortunately contains a high percentage of phosphorus, silica, and sulphur. The rails will not stand proper tests, and cost 7*l.* a ton. The pig iron varies in cost from 3*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* per ton. So much for so-called cheap labour. Having regard to the quality and cost, it would pay them much better to buy what they need in England.

HAN YANG ARSENAL

I next visited the Arsenal, which has a first-rate modern plant, made in Germany. There is a rifle factory, and also one for small field-guns—both under the management of Germans. The weapons are excellently finished, but are practically useless, because they are made of the steel produced at the Han Yang works, which is quite unsuitable for the purpose.

I was surprised to meet a man called Adams, from Sheffield, a native of Rotherham. He came out to erect and manage crucible steel works, but has been there eighteen months, and little has been done, as he cannot get what he requires. He does not think they will give him a proper quality of steel, which must be imported from Europe, and he despairs of doing any good.

The Japanese buy steel for their rifle barrels and all the other fittings in England and France, and do not attempt to make it themselves.

There is also a modern rifle-cartridge factory at Han Yang. They use German powder at

present, but contemplate making their own smokeless powder. There are huge stacks of patent Coppée coke ovens, which have been built for years, but never used. Machinery and plant imported from Europe, both for works and Arsenal, are lying about in all directions, never having been set up. One is sorry to see such shameful waste; but at any rate it seems clear that we have not much to fear from China's competition in the iron, steel, and engineering trades.

MILITARY COLLEGE

The following day we crossed again to Wuchang, and proceeded to the Military College, over which we were taken by Lieutenant Hoffman, a German officer, who is Chang Chih Tung's most trusted adviser in military matters. Two other German officers conduct the Military College, whilst five or six Japanese officers are busily engaged in translating Japanese books of military instruction into Chinese.

They have 70 cadets, sixteen to twenty years of age, and 10 of these are going to Japan for one year's training. The first class-youths were put through their drill, and were smart and soldierlike. They have excellent living and sleeping quarters, large dining-hall, and good class-rooms, also a fine gymnasium.

We also visited the barracks of the sappers and miners and of the artillery. The men paraded and did their marching and musket drill very efficiently. I am told these are the Viceroy's show places, and that they do not fairly represent the average condition of

his forces. He has 27,000 men, and out of these only about 3,000 are disciplined or properly trained. They are armed with antiquated weapons or with the unreliable productions of the Han Yang Arsenal. On the other hand, Lieutenant Hoffman spoke in the highest terms of his men, both as regards conduct and efficiency. He declared he would not hesitate to lead them anywhere.

BRICK-TEA FACTORY

I was shown over a brick-tea factory by the Scotch engineer. The machinery, including engines and boilers, had come from England or Scotland. The electric plant was supplied by Germany, simply because the Germans came up from Shanghai to see after the order, whilst the English firm only wrote a letter.

Brick tea is made of tea dust and inferior tea ground to a fine powder. It is then steamed for two minutes over steaming pans covered by grid-irons, muslin being placed on the top to receive the tea. The tea is next poured into a wooden mould and compressed by a machine with 30 tons pressure on the brick. A finer tablet tea is dried for an hour over charcoal instead of being steamed, then weighed in quarter pounds, poured into a steel-lined box, and compressed by hydraulic power, 40 tons pressure. Each cake or tablet is neatly packed in paper, and then put into a bamboo basket, ready for transportation on camel or mule back to the heart of Russia.

It is to lessen difficulties of transport that the tea is thus prepared.

CHINAMAN DYING ON ROADWAY UNCARED FOR

Human life seems of little value to the Chinese, even though they worship their ancestors. At the brick-tea factory they feed and house their workmen. Near the entrance to their dwelling block I observed a poor creature lying in a dying state on the stones with only a bamboo mat to half cover him. The roadway was crowded, but not a soul gave him the slightest attention. I was told he would 'peg out' before the next morning. I protested against this want of common humanity, only to receive the reply that if I had been in China twenty years I should have got accustomed to such sights. I went direct to a missionary, who has a hospital within a stone's throw of where I saw this sad sight, but he was away from home and the hospital closed.

Mr. Archibald Little not being able to go to Chung-King, I offered to take as a guest a man from the gunboat 'Pigmy,' 'Woodlark,' or 'Woodcock,' or some one from the British Consular body, so that he might take observations and obtain information calculated to advance British trade and interests. The naval men had to decline because they were obliged to communicate with the admiral, and did not know where he was, and the Consular people because Her Majesty's representative at Pekin refused consent.

I inspected the river gunboat 'Woodlark.' She

had actually been sent out without any sleeping accommodation for the men. The Government profess they are going to patrol the Yangtsze for 1,600 miles, but the 'Esk,' 'Pigmy,' 'Woodlark,' and 'Woodcock' now on the river are quite inadequate. The 'Pigmy' has old breech-loading instead of quick-firing guns, and to keep her spick and span as regards paint the commander has to do it at his own expense. A stock of Cardiff coal is kept at Shanghai, Hankow, and Ichang for our ships.

INTERVIEW WITH THE TAOTAI OF HANKOW

On Monday, October 2, the Taotai of Hankow called upon me by appointment, in order to ask for further information on behalf of the Viceroy in regard to two or three matters which I had discussed with him at our interview. He was accompanied by one of the Viceroy's interpreters.

He had been instructed by the Viceroy to say that he had considered my suggestions in reference to the reorganisation of the military forces of China, and he would be glad to seek the sanction of the authorities at Pekin to send twenty students to England for military training and thirty non-commissioned officers to be attached to the Indian Army, half from Hankow and half from Pekin. I replied that I would bring the matter before the authorities at home, and endeavour to ascertain whether this would be agreeable to them; but I suggested that the question of obtaining British officers to drill the

Chinese soldiers should at the same time be also considered. I advised that negotiations be opened on similar lines with Japan and America, and any other countries who desire that the independence and integrity of China should be preserved, with a view to their co-operating in this work. I pointed out that concerted action and assistance uniting the influence of several Powers on behalf of China could alone give any hope of success and prevent the scheme being defeated by Russia and France.

TRADE OF HANKOW

The trade of Hankow is enormous and rapidly increasing. In 1897 the total value was over 7,000,000*l.*; in 1898 it rose 14 per cent., and this year 1899 is going to be a record year. As a merchant said to me, 'Trade in Hankow is booming.' Tea is the principal export, and in May, June, and July last 34 million pounds of tea were sold. A few years ago Russia bought all her tea in London; now she imports direct from Hankow, and refuses to ship an ounce under a foreign flag. The tea is carried exclusively by the Russian Volunteer Fleet. This is an object-lesson of how British trade will be extinguished in China, so far as Russia can do it. British imports are cotton and woollen goods and metals.

MISSIONARY WORK

I called on the Rev. Griffith John, of the London Missionary Society, who told me they had baptised

800 converts in the Hankow district last year. He stated the Dowager-Empress had offered missionaries a certain status and the right of audience with Chinese officials. The Roman Catholics have accepted these, but the Protestants are hesitating.

I made calls on the German, United States, and Japanese Consuls, and found every disposition to co-operate with England in these parts for the promotion of trade.

FROM HANKOW TO ICHANG

I went on board the Japanese steamer 'Tayuen' on Monday afternoon, October 2. This boat was to take me a further 400 miles up the Yangtsze to Ichang, where my experience of travelling in a Chinese junk would begin.

No difficulties are met with in going from Hankow to Ichang. We arrived in three days.

With regard to the character of the country. Up to Kin-ho-kan, 115 miles from Hankow, at the entrance to the Tung-Ting Lake, there are rich flat alluvial plains on both sides of the river, from which excellent crops of millet, indigo, sesame, &c., were being gathered. An occasional hill somewhat relieved the monotony of the landscape. There were many hamlets and frequent large villages all the way. The bed of the river averaged about three-quarters of a mile wide, and in many places large tracts of the adjacent plains were also submerged.

The Tung-Ting Lake covers a considerable area

and has 6 to 12 feet of water in summer, but is dry in winter, except certain river channels. The Seang-yin River runs into it. About 8 miles away we could see the Pagoda of Yo-Chau-Fu, which has recently been opened as a Treaty Port. The anchorage is bad owing to a hard bottom. It is in the Province of Hunan, which is said to be the most anti-foreign in China. The scenery here became bolder, as we had the Kuin range of mountains, about 2,000 feet high, ten to fifteen miles inland.

SHA-SZE

The first considerable town we stopped at was Sha-sze, which was opened as a Treaty Port under the Treaty of Shimonoseki at the close of the Chino-Japanese war. Sha-sze is an unwalled town with a noble stone embankment in three tiers, each 12 feet high, facing the river, which has a bund or promenade on the top. This was built ages ago, in the time of China's greatness, and is now being allowed to decay. There were hundreds of junks moored here, and a large trade is carried on between this port and Szechuan. Manchester goods, American watches and clocks, and kerosene oil are amongst the goods brought hither by the Pin-ho Canal from Hankow, and transhipped into the Szechuan junks. The down cargoes from Szechuan include salt, sugar, opium, tobacco, hemp, pepper, spices, medicinal and other drugs, some silk and wax, and a little gold.

Sha-sze is 300 miles up from Hankow. Two

miles inland is the interesting Chinese walled city of Kin-Chow, which has a garrison of 10,000 Manchu soldiers. In May last a riot took place in Sha-szc, when nearly the whole of the foreign settlement was burnt to the ground. The Europeans escaped in boats. About 50 miles from Ichang the enormous rich but monotonous plains of Hupeh ended, and we had the Western Mountains in view. Soon the river contracted considerably, not being more than 600 yards wide when we reached the Tiger Teeth Gorge (Hu-ya-Tsia), about ten miles below Ichang. Mr. Archibald Little says: 'This gorge forms a break in the last of the cross-ranges, athwart which the Yangtsze breaks its way from the Szechuan plateau to the great Hupeh plain.' Some of the cliffs and peaks rise to an altitude of nearly 3,000 feet, and the scenery is grandly rugged and impressive. I rested three days at Ichang, preparatory to starting up-river in a Chinese house-boat. Mr. Wilton, our excellent Consul, made me heartily welcome.

SEA OF GRAVES

The Consulate, from its windows to the north, east, and west, looks out on a sea of graves in the form of mounds of earth. They literally stretch for miles and miles. It is a curious sensation to feel oneself thus encircled by countless numbers of the dead. This is true to a large extent of many Chinese cities, and prevents their extension, as the

Chinese will rarely allow even their oldest burial-grounds to be built upon.

Ichang is a prosperous trading town of some 40,000 inhabitants. It is not a model place, as the cheap opium and wine tempt the thousands who navigate the river to and from the town.

The geological formation of this rugged region is a coarse conglomerate, with sandstone sometimes associated. On the summit of a conglomerate pinnacle close by, 1,200 feet high, a Buddhist temple is picturesquely situated. Pyramid-shaped hills and vertical cliffs, 500 to 600 feet high, stretch along the south bank of the river, backed by lofty mountains. The Prefect Chun and Brigadier-General Fu called on me, and informed me that the Viceroy had telegraphed that a Chinese gunboat was to escort me up the Yangtsze from this point. I, however, declined this honour, but accepted what is known as a red boat, or lifeboat, manned by picked Chinamen, who wear a uniform with scarlet cloth front and back, on which are Chinese characters in black. I thought this would be a better safeguard in case our Chinese houseboat was wrecked, and also be more handy and useful generally. I found the new river gunboat, 'Woodcock,' had been lying here since February last, and now her going up the Yangtsze has been unaccountably countermanded, no one knows why. This is a serious breach of the distinct pledge given by the Government to patrol the Yangtsze.

In returning the Brigadier-General's call I was

placed in a difficulty through his hospitality. Bowls of soup, with garlic, lotus, water chestnut, and Heaven knows what else in it, were served, which I really could not tackle. A huge chunk of polenta to be eaten with it was also beyond me. I was not very well, so I begged to be excused eating on that ground; whereupon the good General became most solicitous, and pressed first one remedy and then another upon me.

Mr. Him Shan, Messrs. Jardine's agent, had engaged the Chinese houseboat for me, and as there was only a table and one chair in it, some time was occupied in getting our provisions, kitchen cooking equipment—including cooking-stove—all fixed up. The houseboat was about 60 feet long. In the bow was a deck, open during the day, for working the craft, but most ingeniously covered in with bamboo matting at night, so as to make a sleeping-room for eighteen trackers, two pilots, five deck-hands, and the cook. Behind this came my house, which was just like a travelling caravan fixed on a boat instead of on wheels, and divided into three compartments. It was most roughly put together, and had chinks into which you could put your fingers. These I had stuffed with cotton-wool, and then papered over with strips of paper inside. The interior was painted red and roughly decorated with gilt. Behind this was an open space, where the rudder was worked, and beyond that the compartment occupied by the captain (Lao-ta), his wife, and four little children. In addition to the rudder, there is fixed in the

bow a huge bow-sweep, which acts as a second rudder, to be employed if the vessel becomes ungovernable and is not answering her helm. The houseboat (kua-tza) has a huge mast and sail, which are of great service whenever a fair wind comes. Altogether there were to be thirty-eight souls sleeping on board this craft in connection with my expedition, which was, therefore, rather an extensive undertaking. Mr. Him Shan had had a huge flag prepared, with my name in Chinese characters. In Chinese, Walton is 'Wha-li-Tun,' which means the 'flower of propriety.'

I had to get a supply of money for use up country of the most odd description. Gold and silver coins and paper money are unknown. Pieces of silver called sycee are used, and are valued according to weight; but the chief medium of exchange is a round metal coin about the size of a halfpenny with a square hole in the centre. These are strung together, and 850 of them are worth 2*s*. They are, of course, heavy and difficult to carry. As my kua-tza moved off to the other side of the river, where I was to join her next morning, the Chinese gunboat gave her a salute of three guns, and crackers were discharged all around. The latter were to chin-chin their Joss for good luck on the voyage.

To their shame the British have had no complete survey made of the Yangtsze River since 1861. In a river of its changing character old charts are useless. On the other hand, though they have not

a tithe of our trade, the French Jesuit priests have completed a new survey, which I proved to be most accurate, and which was invaluable. This shows great negligence on the part of our officials who are responsible for having surveys made.

CHAPTER VIII

THE UPPER YANGTSZE EXPEDITION

My starting-point—Ichang—is no less than 1,100 miles from the sea, and here the majestic Yangtsze is about three-quarters of a mile wide, even at this season of the year. In summer, when at its highest, it is much more. The usual difference between the highest and the lowest water is sixty to seventy feet, and it has reached nearly 100 feet. Fortunately, the river had fallen rapidly during the previous ten days, and on October 9, when I set out, it might be regarded as in a medium condition. Captain Plant, who had had ten years' experience in navigating rapids on the Karun River, in Persia, accompanied me, to take charge of Mr. Little's steam-launch when we met her. We had telegraphed to have the launch sent down to Patung, some sixty miles above Ichang, so that we might change into her, or we might decide to have the 'kua-tza' towed, as would best facilitate our journey.

YANGTSZE TRACKERS

We got under way about 9.30, and as there was no fair wind our trackers were soon on the towpath,

swarming up slopes and around bluffs, uttering their musical cries to enable them to keep step. When out of sight a drum was beaten to guide them as to when to go ahead. The hawsers are made of bamboo strips twisted into a rope, and will stand an enormous strain. The trackers put a broad band over one shoulder, across the chest, and under the armpit, and attach this to the rope by a thong having a large round flat button at its end. In this way all their drawing power is brought to bear. The trackers are a fine set of men, who look in the pink of condition. I greatly envied them their muscles standing out like whipcord. I found both trackers and crew as contented, merry, and good-natured a lot of travelling companions as I ever desire to have. Unfortunately, no fair wind came to our assistance for some days, and our progress was disappointingly slow.

AN UNSUITABLE CRAFT

I soon discovered that I had got the very worst type of craft for making a rapid journey. She was too heavy and unwieldy altogether, just like lead in the water. In order to encourage the men to put their backs into it I made them daily presents of cash with which to buy pork, which is the Chinaman's greatest luxury. Their food is known as 'chow,' and they think a great deal about it. So long as they get good chow they are as happy as the days are long.

CHINESE COOKS

The Chinese are splendid cooks, and it was very interesting to watch them preparing food in the cleverest, cleanest, and most scientific fashion with the scantiest appliances. They are largely vegetarians, and rice, accompanied by all kinds of vegetables in an appetising form, and also, if possible, by pork, is what they like best, and on this food they thrive splendidly.

To see them all squatting around, emptying by their chop-sticks basin after basin with the greatest gusto, made one feel that their occupation is conducive to health. They never take liquid with their meals, but drink tea before or after them. They only drink hot water—having a strong objection to cold beverages.

The torrent of water we had to get over, as it swept through the gorges or swirled around in whirlpools in some broader part of the river above and below a gorge, often almost beat us back, and then our progress was inch by inch.

BROKEN ADRIFT

Once our rope broke, and we careered down the river in a few moments the distance we had taken hours to ascend. There was some danger of our capsizing if we turned sideways in the rapid; but every man on board was at his post and did the right thing as coolly as if nothing had happened. The Chinese seem to be without the instinct that

would prompt them to assist any one in a difficulty. We swept helplessly down past hundreds of junks moored along the shore, and not one tried to throw us a rope or put off a boat to help us. Our own lifeboat had been nearly swamped, but it was only when she overtook us and took a line ashore that our downstream trip ended.

PORPOISES

We had a series of rapids and whirlpools to pass, and the porpoises which had kept us company the entire distance from the sea here bade us farewell—they cannot face 'chow-chow' water.

The next best thing to having Mr. Archibald Little with me was to have his book, 'Through the Yangtsze Gorges,' which gave me invaluable information as to the character of the river and the objects of interest to be seen. He tells us that, of the junks making the trip from Ichang to Chung-King and back, one in every ten is stranded and one in every twenty totally wrecked. This gives some idea of the dangerous navigation.

The trade on the Yangtsze carried on by junks is very great. It is estimated that there are 5,000 of them, employing 100 men each, which means half a million of men. This is apart from the hundreds of shore trackers waiting at every big rapid to give additional assistance.

During the trip we were all up at 4.30 every morning, and went to bed at 8. I often walked with the trackers when they were on shore, and looked

after getting extra men at the rapids. We had usually two hawsers out, and it was essential to safety that both should be straight and taut before starting to haul up the houseboat.

THE YEH-TAN RAPID

One of the most formidable of the rapids is the Yeh-tan. When we arrived about thirty junks were in front of us, and to take our turn would have meant a detention of two days. One function of a red boat is to secure priority over cargo junks, so we worked round them into position. The rapid was running probably 13 knots an hour. We put out two hawsers, but one of them got fast round a rock and was curved, thus drawing the 'kua-tza' out of the proper channel. Instead of waiting till this was set right the Lao-ta kept signalling to haul away, with the result that our rotten old vessel, having a tremendous current on one side and a powerful eddy on the other, shipped a lot of water, and all but capsized. Then, after righting herself, she struck on a rock, making a big hole in her hull. We got about 120 trackers on the hawsers and brought her up quickly into the smooth water above. Here we cleared the hold and plugged the hole with a bale of cotton. After baling out the water the Chinese set to work to put an inner lining over the damaged part to enable us to proceed on our voyage, and very cleverly they did it. The broken wood was quite rotten, and the houseboat neither had the stability nor was in proper condition for safely

negotiating such vicious water. The whirlpools, where cross-currents rushed and swirled with terrible force in every direction, were even more dangerous, because our unwieldy craft swerved right and left, with the constant liability of striking a submerged rock. We moored at night, but managed ten hours' work a day: one day we made only four miles, and another five. At the end of nine days, when to our great joy the steam-launch hove in sight, we had covered seventy-nine miles, or not quite nine miles a day.

CHINESE SERVANTS

I was most fortunate in my personal attendants. One boy acted as cook, and did splendidly in a kitchen not four feet square, in which the cooking-stove was fixed.

How he managed to turn us out such a variety of beautifully cooked, wholesome food was a marvel. I was told you could not get fresh meat or food up the Yangtsze. However, our boy was constantly on the look-out, and picked up a fish or chicken or fresh eggs day by day. At some few places he got what he called beef and mutton, which I was afterwards told was really buffalo and goat; however, that didn't matter—it was wholesome, and with our appetites we thought we never had eaten better beef and mutton in our lives.

AH SAM

I had one Chinese boy who acted as interpreter; he had been fourteen years in the British Navy, and

was of the greatest possible service. He rejoiced in the curious name of Ah Sam! His worst fault was fondness for drink, which, perhaps, he acquired in our Navy; but he never took it until after his work was done at night. When I paid him off at Ichang I urged him not to go ashore and waste his money, but he arrived at Hankow with a broken head, got in a drunken row. He again promised me that it should be the last time. I could have obtained for him a capital situation on board the gunboat 'Woodcock' but for this failing. Wherever I travel, be it in Asia, Africa, or America, I have had the invariable experience that if one treats the natives with reasonable consideration they render good service. As a rule truth, however, must not be expected.

CHIN-CHINNING JOSS

On the 'kua-tza,' every night after mooring the Lao-ta (skipper) did what is known as chin-chinning his Joss.

The ceremony consists of vigorously beating a gong and then firing crackers. It is an acknowledgment of protection afforded during the day, and a tribute of respect paid in the hope of propitiating and securing favour and help from their god during the next day. On the day we had done only four miles I ventured to suggest that they should chin-chin their Joss a second time, which they promptly did, and, lo and behold! we accomplished twelve and a half miles the next day.

WATER SUPPLY

The water of the river was thick and muddy, so it was necessary to put it into large earthenware vessels called kongs to settle. After that I had it passed through a filter, and then we had lovely water as clear as crystal.

ATTITUDE OF THE CHINESE

During the whole of my 3,200 miles up and down the Yangtsze Valley I landed everywhere and moved freely amongst the Chinese. I never met with incivility once, but, on the contrary, with great courtesy and politeness everywhere. At the rapids, where hundreds of trackers are engaged, you would naturally expect to find a rowdy element, but I saw no sign of it. The people were curious, and if I was putting down something in my notebook a crowd would watch me write, and they would come and touch my, to them, extraordinary-looking clothes. Scores, if not hundreds, would accompany me in my walk through a town or village.

OUR MYSTERIOUS VESSEL

The whole population turned out at every town and village to see our launch pass. A boat forging her way up stream without a tow-rope, sail, or rowers, was indeed a mystery and a wonder. When we blew the steam-whistle many ran away, others put their fingers in their ears, and the rest laughed with astonishment and delight.

STONED BY THE CHINESE

At one place only had we anything in the nature of an attack, and that was at the town of Wan-Hsien. Many thousands of Chinese were massed on a steep sandbank, against which we were moored, when a quarrel arose between the shoremen who were coaling us and the boatmen of a sampan who were bringing people to see the launch. They first spat in each other's faces, and then seized hold of each other's pigtails; whereupon the crowd took sides, and in an instant showers of stones were flying around the launch, smashing the engine-room skylight, cracking a port deadlight, and knocking a corner off the after-compartment. I was sitting writing in front of an open window facing the crowd, but the windows on each side had the outside wooden shutters up. Stones banged against these, but none came in. Captain Plant took his Martini-Henry and I my loaded revolver (in my pocket) on deck, and after we appeared not another stone was thrown. So the attack was clearly not directed against us, and therefore not anti-foreign.

Our red boatmen had arrested three of the rioters, and tied them together by their pigtails. I untied these in face of the crowd and sent them off. I afterwards took five photographs of the people, and we left the place without the slightest further sign of hostility.

WRECKS AND WRECKAGE ON THE YANGTSZE

In the course of our trip we found scores of smashed-up junks on the rocks, and junks floating

bottom uppermost down stream. Bales of Manchester goods, tins of kerosene oil, and boxes of other goods floated past us daily. One junk had been swept into the cleft of some rocks thirty to forty feet above the present level of the river, apparently uninjured, and another was left high and dry on a sandbank forty or fifty feet up.

WEATHER

I had expected almost continuous sunshine and no rain, but for twelve days we never saw the sun, and during four nights it rained in torrents. Fortunately, the days were free from rain, as the one thing a Chinaman won't do is to work in even the slightest rain. Though dull it was not cold. The greatest drawback to me was that I could not take effective photographs of the grand scenery through which I was passing. The city of Chung-King—my destination—is said to be usually enveloped in haze, if not in actual fog.

SCENERY

I must attempt a brief description of the scenery and of the character of the country.

For three miles above Ichang the river is about three-quarters of a mile wide. When we reach the Ichang gorge it suddenly narrows to 300–400 yards, and soon grand and impressive scenery surrounds us. Perpendicular cliffs rise on each side. There is no towpath, and in the absence of a favourable wind progress can only be made by working the yulohs

(oars) and by clawing the rock with boathooks. Limestone is the principal rock, and it is quarried for building purposes. Some of the perpendicular faces of rock, peaks, needles, and square cliffs are very fine. One pinnacle of limestone, almost like a miniature Matterhorn, is said to be 1,800 feet high, whilst some huge cliffs, bleached white, are given by different authorities as 2,500 and 3,000 feet. Picturesque houses—bamboo framework and walls, and thatched with reeds and grasses—abound wherever a break in the gorge occurs. They are surrounded by clumps of bamboos, orange and pomola trees. The women and children were shy; whenever they saw me approaching they ran into their houses and hid themselves. We saw some lovely natural grottoes, with creepers gracefully overhanging, including Virginia creeper. Maidenhair and other ferns and rock plants were growing luxuriantly.

MONKEYS

At one place, where they depend on the Indian corn raised for food, we were told that a few weeks before hundreds of monkeys had come down from the mountains and carried it all off.

LUKAN GORGE

Our next great gorge was the Lukan, which at points narrows to 450 yards, and extends about three miles. The precipitous slopes, rising 2,500 feet, are clothed with brushwood wherever any soil can lodge. The strong silent current ran four or

five knots, but, fortunately, an upstream breeze came to the rescue, and we sailed along merrily. The trackers and crew were delighted, as it gave them practically a holiday.

The third great gorge was the Mitsang, where the cliffs closed in, and the effect in the gloaming was weird and impressive. We stuck in the gorge owing to a head wind, and could not move for hours.

KWEI-CHOW

The old city of Kwei-Chow was the first place of any size we reached, and is forty-one miles from Ichang. Below and opposite to it the whirlpools were strong and dangerous. I crossed the river in the red boat to send a telegram (and, by the by, it cost 5*s.* for seven words, though only an inland message), and in returning we were drawn into the vortex of a whirlpool and went round and round. We could not cross it, and with the greatest difficulty got out again on the side on which we entered.

CHINESE COAL

A few miles beyond Kwei-Chow I found coal of fair quality was being worked by tunnels into a vertical seam two feet wide between two faces of rock. Men were carrying it in baskets on their backs down a ravine. The lumps were separated, and the small was then converted into briquettes. The process is to mix a proportion of loam with the coal, add water, and then knead the mass with the bare feet. It is then pressed by hand into small

circular wooden moulds, and afterwards turned out and set to dry.

THE WUSHAN GORGE

The Wushan gorge, halfway through which is the boundary between the Provinces of Hupeh and Szechuan—the point where we changed to the launch —is no less than twenty miles long, but in some places only 300 to 400 yards wide. When doing the first part of the gorge in our houseboat, at places where the cliffs rose perpendicularly on both sides and the current was too strong for our rowers, the red boat would take out a line 200 to 300 yards ahead and fasten it to a projection of rock, then those on board would draw the houseboat up stream by hauling in the line. At other places the services of our swimming trackers (Tai-wan-ti) were requisitioned. Two or three of these are engaged for every boat. They spend half their time naked as Adam, ready to dive into the river to disentangle towing ropes from rocks or to take out lines wherever needed. These men swim magnificently, and enjoy the best of health, rarely taking cold. The water in Wushan gorge is declared to be unfathomable. We passed what looked like slate rock tilted vertically, with partings every inch or so. The predominant rock was hard limestone, but masses of granitic rock and of black vitriolised slag were scattered about with terribly jagged edges, making this a dangerous stretch of water to navigate. The gorge continued narrow, and had high imposing cliffs on

the left, with a pathway cut in the face of the rock. On the right were triangular mountains, with rock faces of grey and red ochre shades of colouring, rising up to not less than 2,000 feet; then beyond were sheer cliffs 1,500 feet high, and a pinnacle of rock 2,500 feet. Huge and beautifully wooded ravines intersected these mountains right and left. Without exception it was by far the grandest and most impressive river scenery I have met with. All through, in every cleft of the rocks, scrubby bushes grew, furnishing green or autumn-tinted foliage to relieve the bareness of the rock slopes. At the end of the gorge is Wushan Hsien, and this was my first sight of a Szechuan town.

TRANSHIPPING TO STEAM-LAUNCH

On the morning of October 18 we were glad indeed to transfer ourselves, bag and baggage, into the steam-launch 'Leechuen,' which my friend Mr. Archibald Little had so kindly placed at my disposal. Our Lao-ta and all on board the 'kua-tza' tried hard to persuade us to go on in her; but I could not afford the time, and, besides, I wished to have the experience of making the trip up to Chung-King by steam. At last they submitted gracefully to the inevitable, and, being consoled by a good present, did all they could to facilitate an early start. We left amid salvoes of crackers for good luck and a multitude of chin-chins from the Lao-ta and crew. We had 378 miles to do having covered only seventy-nine miles in nine

days in the houseboat—and this we accomplished in nine days more, in spite of great difficulties—being an average of forty-two miles per day in the launch, as compared with nine in the houseboat. The usual time occupied is thirty to forty days, so my eighteen were considered exceptionally good time.

CHAPTER IX

THE VOYAGE UP THE YANGTSZE—continued

We could have done much better had the launch been in good working order and suitable as regards size, build, and steaming power. She had been in the hands of Chinese engineers for two years, and the engines were all to pieces. Her length was only 45 feet, and tonnage $7\frac{29}{100}$ tons, and instead of having water-tight compartments and being constructed of 3·16 mild steel, I found the shell was 1 inch of teak, and that a hole bumped in her would mean being at the bottom of the river in a few minutes. Worse than this, there was no donkey-engine and no hand feed-pumps, whilst the feed-pumps attached to the engine were insufficient to keep the boiler properly supplied with water when steaming through difficult water at 175 lb. pressure. At such times the water nearly disappeared from the gauge glass, and we had to stop over and over again, draw the fires, and refill the boiler by pouring water through the steam-pipe. I suspect the danger of an explosion was frequently considerable, and as I sat in the cabin writing, with my back to the boiler, I often wondered if it would burst like a bomb. To make

matters worse, the joint of the main steam-pipe next the boiler gave way, and we had no means of repairing it. To crown all, the maximum speed proved to be only seven knots, so she had to be hauled over the worst rapids in the same way as the houseboat. Under these conditions our journey was an exciting one. We never knew from moment to moment that a breakdown would not occur and strand us altogether. All we could do was to be on the alert constantly and leave nothing undone to keep her going. Captain Plant understood boilers and machinery thoroughly, or we could not have reached Chung-King by steam. Several times the launch heeled over, so that water came into the engine-room and cabin, and once in a rapid the hawsers had to be cut with a hatchet to prevent her going down. In whirlpools we had her careering all over, and occasionally she shied at a piece of stiff water and bolted right round. We fortunately had a splendid crew of ten men in the red boat alongside, or we could not have ventured to continue our efforts. As it happened, we came out of it safe and sound; but knowing the river as I now do, and also the launch, I certainly could not be induced to undertake the trip a second time in so unsuitable a vessel.

KWEI-CHOW-FU

The gorges proper end at Kwei-chow-fu, 108 miles from Ichang. This is an important prefectural city in a wide open valley. The Prefect and the Commander of the Military Forces called on me, and

offered an escort of two red boats to accompany me to Chung-King. I accepted one boat, but had her manned with ten men instead of six, so as to have them available as trackers in case the launch broke down. When I returned the visits of the officials at the Yamên, I passed along comparatively clean streets paved with large slabs of stone and lined with good Chinese shops. Some of the streets were covered overhead with bamboo awning. I received a salute of three guns on entering and leaving the Yamên, and the streets were lined with people. I was much struck with the fine physique of the inhabitants of the Yangtsze Valley generally, and of Szechuan Province particularly. They are all well dressed, too, and have a distinct air of prosperity. Just as our launch was leaving there arrived alongside a most generous present from the Prefect—a ham, a leg of mutton, a chicken and a live duck, also boxes of Chinese cakes, dried fish, and vermicelli—which was a most useful contribution towards replenishing our larder. According to Chinese etiquette only one or two of these offerings ought to have been accepted and the rest returned. My boy retained them all! When the river is low, holes are dug in the sand near this city, from which salt brine is drawn and then evaporated.

CHINESE OFFICIALS

At every place where we stopped the Mandarins immediately called and offered me every assistance in their power. Their politeness and grace of bear-

ing were charming, even though in their hearts they might be looking down with contempt upon the 'foreign devil.' It was, no doubt, the instructions of the powerful Viceroy Chang Chih Tung that secured me so much attention.

SZECHUAN

This magnificent province, with sixty millions of prosperous, industrious people, through which the rest of my journey lay, is full of interest. The valley opened out; there were frequent bays on the river, where, all surrounded by mountains of purple colouring, one could imagine oneself among the heather-clad hills of Scotland and on a Scottish loch. This continued for hundreds of miles, and arose from the pinkish-red colour of the soil, indicative, I imagine, of the presence of iron. In place of limestone and granite there were eroded masses of sandstone everywhere, of the most varied forms—cones, crags, and pillars, sometimes three or four tiers rising one above another. The country was better wooded and had most fertile soil, every yard of which is cultivated. The alluvial soil next the river is ploughed deeply, and grows two crops a year, one being reaped in April or May, and the second one later. Commodious picturesque homesteads are studded everywhere, nestling in groves of bamboo, cedars, and Tung-tsu (varnish-oil trees), with their large and beautiful shining leaves. The houses are white, with overhanging roofs, and the black wood framework shows through at the gable ends and

sides, just like a Swiss chalet. They have, indeed, every appearance of peaceful happy homes in a land of civilisation, and showed me how ignorant I had been of China and the Chinese. Opium is largely produced in Szechuan, and the poppy, with its dark green leaves and white, red, and purple tulip-like flowers, makes the landscape gorgeous in the spring. The sugar cane flourishes, and tobacco, tea, hemp, beans, peas, millet, wheat, barley, indigo, and the castor-oil plant are also grown. Among the fruits are oranges, pomolas, persimmons, pomegranates, melons, peaches, apricots, and walnuts. All kinds of vegetables are produced in profusion. On the principle of 'our content being our best having,' I should judge that these people are to be envied. I am, however, told that extortionate and corrupt officials often largely rob these industrious workers of the fruits of their toil. This was practically the character of the country for 350 miles from Kwei-chow-fu to Chung-King.

ABSENCE OF BIRDS AND ANIMAL LIFE

One thing that struck me was the absence of wild birds and four-footed animals on the Upper Yangtsze, and I never met any one who could explain to me the why and the wherefore.

NOVEL DUCK-REARING

On the other hand, domestic fowls are very numerous. I saw immense bands of ducks being driven out by Chinamen, and it is very interesting

to observe the perfect manner in which a duck-keeper manages his troop. He will turn them into a paddy-field with the growing rice, where they can feed at leisure on the smaller aquatic animals, and you see nothing but the quivering of the stalks of the paddy; but immediately he makes a peculiar call, or rattles a split bamboo, out come some hundreds of these intelligent creatures on the banks, and at his command file off with military precision to some other feeding-ground.

GOLD

On some of the gravel beds of the Yangtsze they wash the sand and shingle in rockers, and endeavour to find and extract particles of gold, which they believe is washed down from the mountains of Tibet. The yield, however, is so small that only the poorest people work at this laborious employment.

FENG-TU-CHENG

We passed several other towns on the way to Chung-King, to which I will not refer; but the ancient walled city of Feng-tu, *i.e.* 'The Abundant Capital,' close to which is Tien-tsze Shan, 'Mountain of the Son of Heaven,' must not be omitted. The Temple is dedicated to the Emperor of the 'Yin,' or dead. It is celebrated over the whole eighteen provinces of China, as at every death the officiating Taoist priest indites a despatch to the Tien-tsze, duly addressed to Feng-tu-Cheng, notifying him of the newcomer. This despatch is, however, not sent

through the terrestrial post, but by the celestial road, being burnt to ashes. I am indebted to Mr. Little for this information.

ARRIVAL AT CHUNG-KING

On the morning of October 27 we were steaming up past that portion of the city known as Kiang-pei-ting, and only separated from Chung-King proper by the Kia-ling River, which there flows into the Yangtsze. Soon we were abreast of the imposing-looking city, with its fine old walls built on sandstone cliffs 70 to 80 feet high. Several pagodas and many white houses make the outside view of the city picturesque. A lot of green moss on the sandstone indicated a very damp climate. Several houses facing the river had highly decorated façades—black and gilt, with ornamental work of an elaborate and fantastic character. The great river here, though nearly 1,600 miles from the sea, was not less than two-thirds of a mile wide even at this low season. On the left bank stretched a suburb with a range of conical well-wooded hills, 1,500 feet high, in the background. We were quickly moored at that side, close to Mr. Archibald Little's hong, and received a cordial welcome from his agent, Mr. Nicholson. The terrace in front of the house commanded a fine view of the city and of two reaches of the river. I obtained some exercise by climbing up 1,500 feet to call on the English Consul at his hill bungalow.

The British Consulate in Chung-King is a dilapidated insanitary old Chinese house, overrun with

rats and surrounded by filth, so it is little wonder that the British representative escapes to the hills. The French and the United States have splendid new Consulates. Seeing the great influence that this sort of thing has on Orientals, it is false economy to have let twenty years elapse since this place was made a Treaty Port without putting our Consul in a position to represent us suitably.

I was invited to be the guest of Mr. Davidson, of the Friends' Mission, but met him unexpectedly, while on his way to Shanghai to see his brother, who had been seriously injured by the Chinese, off to England. In his absence I stayed with Mr. Nicholson.

Chung-King is a huge town with a population of 400,000, and narrow, crowded, and picturesque streets. We rested two days, preparatory to the return journey.

CHAPTER X

A RECORD JOURNEY IN THE INTERIOR

I HAVE now returned in safety from the interior of China, having accomplished a journey of 3,200 miles over her greatest inland waterway in about half the time usually occupied.

THE POLITICAL AND COMMERCIAL SITUATION IN SZECHUAN

Before describing my return journey I wish to refer briefly to the political and commercial situation in the great populous and most western province of China, Szechuan.

The inhabitants are exceptionally prosperous, and the volume of trade is likely to increase phenomenally. We have an agreement with France, of January 1896, in which each nation pledges itself to use its best offices to obtain for the other greater facilities to trade in Yunnan and Szechuan on equal terms and conditions. I find, however, that France has entirely disregarded that agreement; that she is energetically seeking not only exclusive rights and privileges for herself, but also to prevent our obtaining similar advantages. France

is represented by able diplomatists who are most active, and the whole province is covered by missions under French Jesuit priests, who, whilst they are very successful in their mission work, also give invaluable assistance to their countrymen by the commercial, geological, and political information they convey to them. The power and influence of the fathers with the Chinese are immense. They have made a geological survey of the whole province, and the French Government are demanding from the Chinese Government the exclusive right to work minerals in six of the richest districts as compensation for attacks made upon their missionaries.

The French have also a considerable number of engineers surveying in order to ascertain the best railway route from the colony of Tonquin through Yunnan into Szechuan. They are actively engaged in constructing the southern part of this line, and have already railway material on the ground for continuing it northwards. The French Government are determined, apparently, to thus tap the trade of South-west China ahead of us in the hope not of sharing with but of excluding us.

On the other hand, instead of having begun to build a railway from British Burma to Chung King on the Yangtsze two years ago, as a question of high imperial policy—not only as a counterpoise to the Russian Siberian-Manchurian and Trans-Caspian Railways, but also to safeguard British commercial interests in South-west China—Her Majesty's Government have folded their arms and done nothing.

They have not even had surveys started to investigate and determine the most practicable route. This neglect to secure us an equal opportunity to trade in the greatest undeveloped market in the world will seriously hinder the prosperity and well-being of the British people in the future.

BRITISH CONSUL AT CHUNG KING

We had an admirable and energetic representative in Mr. Litton, and because he was exceedingly active he was recalled. In short, British interests, whether political or commercial, in South-west China are being disregarded by our Government, composed, as it unfortunately is, too largely of men who are ignorant of the trade requirements of the country.

HOW A CHINAMAN OVERREACHED HIMSELF

We had a pilot on the launch up to Chung King who thought he was indispensable, and actually demanded 20*l.* in advance before he would start on the return trip of three days. To his surprise we told him his services were not required, and to clear out. We got a much better man, who was more than satisfied with 10*s.* a day. The first man was then willing to go for even less, but I refused to re-engage him.

UNPUNCTUALITY OF CHINAMEN

Chinamen have no idea of punctuality. Our new pilot was to be on board at 5 A.M. on October 29, but

did not come until 7.30, and then was surprised that I thought he was late. We got under way at once and started down stream with the hearty good-byes of a group of Chung-King European residents sounding in our ears. At 5.30 we moored at Kao-Kia-Tcheng, having done in ten hours what took us thirty-four hours' steaming in going up.

SIN-T'AN, OR NEW RAPID

The next day we had to shoot the Sin-t'an, or New Rapid, where the whirlpools were terrific. We were tossed to and fro like a cork, and but for Capt. Plant's splendid steering the chances of our striking a rock would have been very great. At the end of the second day we had done in twenty hours' steaming what ninety-six hours were required to accomplish in the journey up.

The following day, in passing Kwei-Chow-fu, I called on the Prefect and took him a present of English biscuits, tinned fruits, &c., which seemed to please him very much.

We swept down the gorges and various rapids at a high speed. This was the only way to prevent swerving out of the main channel on to the rocks. At the Niu Kan-t'an Whirlpool we were drawn in and heeled right over, so that the water came into the cabin and engine-room. For a moment, as the launch hung in the balance, I thought we were going under; then she righted herself, and the danger was over.

THE YEH-T'AN RAPID

We shot the Yeh-t'an Rapid, which was running thirteen to fourteen knots, at not less than eighteen or nineteen knots. The water was very rough: big waves were rolling in the main current, not only down stream, but eddies and currents brought cross-waves curling towards us from each side. There were more than two hundred big junks waiting below the rapid until it moderated, and it was foolhardy on our part to shoot it in a little launch only forty-five feet long. However, before we knew where we were, or had any time to think, we were in it, surrounded by surging, rolling waters. Our safety lay in keeping the launch right in the centre of the main current. Any swerving to one side, and we should have been rolled over and over. Fortunately we went straight through, soaked to the skin, but not any the worse otherwise. It was indeed an exciting experience and a hazardous venture. Our red boat did not fare so well. She was chucked right up into the air, and smacked back on to the water repeatedly, until she was liberated by both her tow ropes snapping off like pieces of thread. Luckily, both gave way at once, or we might have dragged her under. We lost her protection in case we came to grief. Beyond a bruised hand, no one was injured. We had to get through a series of strong whirling pieces of water opposite and just below Kwei-Chow, and were rushed out of our course in a somewhat alarming fashion. Our difficulties were then over.

THE QUICKEST TRIP ON RECORD

At 9.30 on November 1 we reached Ichang, having done the 457 miles from Chung King to Ichang in thirty-one hours' steaming. This is the quickest trip on record, I am told.

FIRST PASSAGE DOWN RAPIDS AND WHIRLPOOLS BY STEAM

What was more gratifying to me was the fact that I had made the first passage downstream by steam power. Mr. Archibald Little was the first to go up by steam and I the second. Everybody was astonished to see us back at Ichang so soon.

ICHANG TO HANKOW

The next day I left Ichang for Hankow on Her Majesty's gunboat 'Woodcock.' Captain Watson was good enough to allow me to go down with him in order that I should not be stranded for a week waiting for a steamer. Curiously enough, we reached Hankow in thirty-one hours' steaming—376 miles—so that I had done 833 miles from Chung-King in sixty-two hours. The weather was cool and bracing, and, fortunately, the mosquitoes had vanished. I find the 'Woodcock' and 'Woodlark' are not suitable for navigating the upper Yang-tsze, and will try and ascertain at home who is responsible for the blunder. The plates are less than one-eighth of an inch in thickness instead of three-sixteenths; the speed only eleven, whereas it should be

sixteen knots; and they ought to be paddle-wheelers and not twin-screw boats. The paddles are most useful to steer with if the boat fails to answer to her helm. To be of any real service gunboats sent to patrol the upper Yangtsze must be able to go anywhere at any time—no matter what the state of the river may be—and if built on the lines I have indicated they could do it.

Not an hour's delay should take place in carrying out the Government's pledge in regard to this matter. Mr. Little will have a cargo steamer on the river early next year, and it will, in all probability, need protection. It will take a long time to acquire accurate knowledge of the river, and it is unpardonable that the 'Woodcock' and 'Woodlark' should not have been allowed to gain all possible knowledge and experience of it during last year. If the Government's policy of drift continues, we shall be forestalled by the Japanese or the Germans. The latter are building two boats to run with cargo on the upper reaches of the river.

I was two days in Hankow and then returned direct by steamer to Shanghai.

CHAPTER XI

SHANGHAI TO HONG KONG

I LEFT Shanghai on November 14, on the French mail steamer 'Sydney,' bound for Hong Kong. I found on board an absence of organisation, order, discipline, and cleanliness, in striking contrast to what is usual on a large British passenger steamer. Captain Aubert was most courteous: he gave me the seat of honour at his right hand, and did much to make me bear more patiently the general discomfort on board.

The one redeeming feature of the 'Sydney' was her steadiness in a heavy gale. On the second day the north-east monsoon developed into almost a hurricane, just when we were in a dangerous part of the Straits of Formosa. The Straits are only sixty to eighty miles wide, and have the coast of China on one side and the island of Formosa on the other, and inside Formosa are the dangerous rocky Pescadores Islands, lying right in the Straits. It was on one of these that the P. and O. passenger steamer 'Bokhara' struck and foundered seven or eight years ago, only two passengers being saved. Amongst the passengers were thirteen members of a cricket team, who had been up to Shanghai to play a match.

Fortunately it was daylight, and we were running with the wind behind us. The sea simply boiled around us owing to many shallows, but not having to face the gale we did not ship any of the huge rolling seas. We passed Her Majesty's cruiser 'Bonaventure' going northwards and pitching terribly.

The third day the sea had moderated, and in the afternoon we arrived safely at Hong Kong.

ENTRANCE TO HONG KONG

The Captain asked me to go on to the bridge, so as to see more of the entrance to the harbour. It is a narrow winding channel between bare rocky islands. The town is situated on the north side of the island, and has the precipitous but luxuriantly wooded slopes of the rocky peak rising about 1,800 feet behind it, whilst in front is a fine expanse of deep water. A number of men-of-war, including several British, lay at anchor; also many large ocean-going steamers; whilst a multitude of junks, steam-launches, and other boats were moored in all directions. The scene was lively and impressive.

CITY OF HONG KONG

The palatial-looking buildings of granite and brick lining the sea-front and rising tier above tier up the hill, together with the considerable number crowning the very summit of the peak, form a handsome city, almost unique as regards beauty of situation and surroundings. It was indeed refresh-

ing, after my disappointment in other parts of China, to gaze on this fine possession of the British nation away in the Far East, and to realise that here, at any rate, one might feel proud to be an Englishman. The climate here at this season of the year is perfect, and at the Hon. J. J. Keswick's, 1,700 feet above the sea, I had in cool bracing air and a perfect flood of sunshine a most delightful and beneficial rest after all the hard travelling I had done. It is only after hard work that rest can really be enjoyed.

The views from the peak to the south and west of Rocky Islands, with intervening winding waterways of the loveliest shades of blue, were exquisite under the brilliant sunshine, and some of the sunsets were gorgeous.

From the signal station we looked down on the town and harbour, and at night myriads of lights — for every craft, large or small, is compelled to show lights—made a gay and brilliant scene.

The population is about a quarter of a million, and both the trade and the city are growing rapidly. It is one of the most prosperous places in the world. The shipping inwards and outwards is estimated to carry produce and goods worth fifty millions sterling every year. I called on the Governor (Sir Henry Blake) and had an interesting talk.

ADMIRAL SEYMOUR

I next went on board our first-class battleship the 'Centurion' to pay my respects to the Commander-in-chief on the Pacific Station, Admiral Sir

Edward Seymour. I lunched with him the next day in order to have a quiet chat over what has recently occurred, and also to ascertain his views of the present situation in China. Admiral Seymour is a splendid type of man, and but for the fact that neither he nor our Minister in Pekin has been allowed any liberty of action whatever by the authorities at home, our position out here would have been very different indeed from what it is to-day.

KAU-LUNG

Across the bay to the north lies Kau-Lung, and behind it the new concession recently acquired by the British. Our territory is little but rocky sterile mountains, and the line of frontier a river which in parts can be stepped across—the worst possible. It was accepted in spite of the urgings of men on the spot, military and civil, when the slightest firmness would have secured a fine mountain barrier a little farther north. We occupied Sam Chun beyond the frontier, when the taking possession of our ground was opposed, and this gave us a healthy camping ground which we urgently needed.

EVACUATION OF SAM CHUN

To the disgust of everybody at Hong Kong, instructions came out recently to evacuate this place. It is said our home authorities ordered this to assist the Chinese Government in resisting some aggressive demands on the part of the French; if so, it was a

fruitless sacrifice, as the French had everything they asked for conceded within ten days after our withdrawal. As it stands, it is very doubtful whether the Kau-Lung extension is of much value.

PUBLIC GARDENS

The Public Gardens at Hong Kong are large and well kept. Brilliant tropical flowers abound, and the luxuriant growth of ferns and palms provides many a cool retreat from the burning sun.

HAPPY VALLEY

The numerous cemeteries—Roman Catholic, Protestant, Parsee, Mohammedan, and Chinese—are situated in Happy Valley, three miles from the town with perfectly lovely surroundings, and are full of flowers, ferns, and palms.

RAILWAYS

There is no railway into the interior from the Kau-Lung Extension, and though a concession has been got to build one to Canton, I find it will not be proceeded with except in connection with the Canton-Hankow Line, for which the Americans are vainly trying to get a properly ratified contract from the Chinese Government. All confidence has been, for the present, destroyed by the way in which our Government allowed the Russian Government to ride roughshod over the British investor in regard to the Newchwang Extension Railway.

WEST RIVER EXPEDITION

The waterway from Hong Kong to South-west China is the West River, and to explore this I left in a small steamboat, the 'Samshui,' on November 20, towing a 380-ton barge alongside, for Wuchau, 255 miles from Hong Kong.

PIRACY ON THE WEST RIVER

We had about 300 Chinese passengers crowded on the main deck, and the question was whether, in view of the numerous and repeated acts of piracy on the West River recently, there might not be among them forty or fifty men armed with revolvers and knives having the intention of seizing the ship. Near one place, Kumchuk, which we had to pass in the night, a band of pirates had captured a British-owned steamer ten days before. After ransacking the passengers' baggage and the ship's cargo, they compelled the crew, at the point of the revolver, to navigate the steamer so as to enable them to seize a large junk, from which they took 2,000 taels in gold and a quantity of silk. Though our gunboats are said to be patrolling the West River, no effort had been made to punish the perpetrators of this outrage. I expected the pirates, thus emboldened, might hold us up, especially as the only two gunboats of any use had gone up the river to escort Prince Henry of Prussia to Wuchau. We placed two Sikhs with loaded rifles at the stairway leading up from the main deck; the captain and officers all had rifles and

revolvers handy; and most of us slept with our revolvers under our pillows. However, the night passed quietly, and in the early morning we discharged our crowd of Chinese, and were able to relax our precautions.

STUCK ON A SANDBANK

We were unfortunate in running hard fast on a sandbank only a few hours from Wuchau, and it was only after eight hours' detention that we were hauled off by another steamer, which came to the rescue.

WUCHAU

We reached Wuchau, an ordinary Chinese town of 50,000 inhabitants, situated on a low bank close to the river, which rises fifty feet in summer and drives the majority of the people to the upper stories of their dwellings. The river Fu Zo enters the West River close by: it is clear and green in contrast with the reddish-coloured West River. Steam launches can go some distance up the Fu Zo, by which a considerable trade is done with Kwei-lin, the capital of Kwang-si. The country around Wuchau and up the Fu Zo is fertile. It is an ancient city—a portion enclosed by walls dates back to 592 A.D., and a still more ancient city preceded it.

I had intended going on from Wuchau 319 miles further to Nanning-fu, and thence across country to Langson, where I should have got rail to Hanoi, the capital of Tonquin—now annexed by the French but I found it would, owing to the low state of the

river, occupy more time than I could venture to give in view of the uncertainty as to when Parliament would meet. I had the good fortune to have all the information collected by a most capable traveller—Mr. Sheppard, who had just completed a journey of investigation right up to Pose, which is 256 miles beyond Nanning-fu—placed at my disposal, and this reconciled me to the abandonment of the trip.

CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRY

The country we passed through between Hong Kong and Wuchau was less densely populated than I expected, and not rich agriculturally. We saw several fairly large towns, however, and though the land next the river is by no means uniformly fertile, a good deal is fairly so, and, as it is the water highway to very important regions beyond, our just right to have an equal opportunity to trade on the West River along with other nations ought to be upheld.

NANNING-FU

Nanning-fu, which was declared by Her Majesty's Government to be opened as a treaty port in February 1899, and claimed by them as a great diplomatic achievement, is not yet opened; and, if it were, the Inland Waters Navigation Laws in force are such as would render it of little value. The Government announced that they had concluded an agreement under which British ships would be able to take British goods to every riverside town and station in China.

The fact is, however, that they allow regulations to remain in force restricting the trading of British steamers to the very limited number of treaty ports, and debarring them from loading or discharging goods at intervening stations. This materially lessens their chance of getting full cargoes and doing a profitable business. It operates so adversely that steamers put on to run between Canton and Wuchau are to be taken off again.

SCENERY

The scenery of the West River was spoilt for me by the finer character of that of the Yangtsze, but we passed several pretty bits of picturesque well-wooded country, and one gorge several miles long had hills of a sort of sandstone, but largely grass-covered, rising up to 1,500 feet in places on both sides of the river. There was also a fine rock 1,410 feet high, close to the river, known as the Monk's Head, and very much resembling one.

LEPERS

Lepers are very numerous in this district, and are employed to keep bamboo poles fixed at various points in the river to indicate the channel. It was sad to see some of the poor creatures; but, Chinese-like, they did not appear to think anything of it.

BOAT LIFE ON THE WEST RIVER

Millions of people live in boats in China. Canton and the West River are specially noticeable in

this respect. One craft—a Chinese stern-wheel paddle-boat—interested me. The paddle is worked from inside the stern by foot, just like a treadmill.

Another boat very common here is called a 'slipper boat,' from its resemblance in shape to a slipper. The speed at which the natives scull them is wonderful.

NOVEL METHOD OF SHOOTING

A novel method, employed on the West River, of getting at birds is to build a bamboo hut on a rock in the river and place cleverly made artificial birds on the top of this, and here and there around it. The sportsman hides himself inside the shelter, and unsuspecting birds fly over and light on the rock, when they are easily shot.

PAWNSHOPS

In South China pawnshops are used to an extent undreamt of at home. They are huge, high, square buildings, quite the prominent feature in every town or village. People deposit not only their valuables, but in summer their winter, and in winter their summer, clothing, and get advances on them. These pawnbrokers also act as bankers.

STRANDED AGAIN

We had not left Wuchau two hours on the return journey when we stranded on a sandbank, and here we remained 16½ hours. After two steamers with

hawsers attached failed to get us off I transhipped into a small Chinese steamboat bound direct for Canton. We had to go via Kumchuk, the pirate stronghold, and as the gunboat 'Sandpiper' had gone to Canton with Prince Henry of Prussia, the torpedo destroyer was down river, and the 'Tweed' was useless, I could not help thinking we might be attacked, especially as we had to thread our way through narrow creeks from Kumchuk to Canton. We had no Sikhs, and only the captain and I had revolvers, so that we were not in a position to repel a serious attack. We kept awake till daylight, but again escaped molestation.

CANTON

My visit to the large and prosperous city of Canton with its land and water population variously estimated at from one to two millions was most interesting. It is situated on the Chu-Kiang, or Pearl River, and is the capital of Kwang Tung, the province of China forming the hinterland of our possession Hong Kong. Hong Kong is really the port of Canton and of Kwang Tung generally. The earliest traders with Canton were Arabs and Portuguese, then Dutch, and lastly English. The old city is enclosed by walls 22 to 40 feet high, five miles in circumference, and the suburbs extend five miles along the river. Canton is on a perfectly flat plain with only one or two slight elevations within the walls to the north. There are a number of trees, and the houses are solidly built—excellent bricks and brickwork—and

numerous temples and pagodas add to the picturesqueness of the city. The narrow streets are paved with large slabs of rock, and are a scene of the greatest animation. The natives are dirtier than in many other parts of China—that impression being increased by their dark clothing—but they are more active and have more go and intelligence than in most other provinces.

They are anti-foreign, and as we passed along the streets the cries of 'foreign devil' and 'kill him' were frequently hurled at us, but really meant nothing serious. Mr. Dewstoe, a Wesleyan missionary, took me round, and we met with an indication of anti-foreign sentiment on the part of the children. We visited the five-story pagoda, from which we had a grand view right over the city. In proceeding along the city wall we were followed by a crowd of boys, who first contented themselves with howling at us and then took to stone-throwing. One striking me on the foot, we turned and went for them, whereupon they fled.

TEMPLE OF 500 GENII

We went over the Temple of the 500 Genii. The figures are gilded over, and each is dissimilar. There is great variety of expression, and some are very natural. Curiously, one of them is pointed out, and you are told he is Marco Polo. We also visited the Temple of the Emperor, where I photographed three huge gilded gods.

THE EXAMINATION HALL

Our next object of interest was the huge Examination Hall, where thousands are examined at once every three years. There are long rows of cells where each student is isolated to do his work. These examinations are usually gone in for in the hope of a successful pass ensuring an official position, but the passion of Chinamen to be in the ranks of the literati causes old men of eighty years of age to enter the lists. It often happens that a grandfather, father, and son go in for the same examination.

TRADE OF CANTON

Silk and tea are the staple trades of Canton. Embroidered silks, blackwood furniture, and carved ivory are specialities. I spent some time in visiting the various workshops, and the fascination of Canton—despite the smells—grew upon me. The merchants and shopkeepers are excellent business men and very independent: they never press you to buy, but you may take or leave anything as you elect. Canton imports a quantity of English piece goods and other general household requisites.

BOATWOMEN

Thousands of boatwomen pull houseboats and large sampans: they are bright little women, and evidently very muscular, judging by the ease and speed with which they propel their craft. They are all more or less decorated with jewellery.

WATERWAYS

Canton is surrounded by a perfect labyrinth of waterways, especially towards Hong Kong and branching south-west and west. The country between the Pearl River and West River is splendidly fertile, and so dense is the population that large quantities of rice have to be imported for their sustenance.

I returned to Hong Kong on s.s. 'Hankow.'

DUCK BREEDING

We passed duck-breeding places. The ducks are taken down the river in boats with large projecting decks on each side on which they sleep, each duck in its own bunk. They go ashore to feed and are recalled by a whistle or a particular call from the duck-keeper. A gangway is put out, and they march on board direct to their respective sleeping-places.

AT HONG KONG AGAIN

On my return from Canton I had six more days at Hong Kong. I spent the time in having interviews with men able to give accurate information, including the Governor, Sir Hy. Blake, Mr. Lockhart, Colonial Secretary, Colonel The O'Gorman (who occupied our Kau-Lung Extension), Mr. Francis (Chairman of the China Assoc.), Mr. Wilcox (Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce), Sir Thomas Jackson (Manager of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank), Mr. Wildman (American Consul), and many others.

ST. ANDREW'S DAY BALL

I received an invitation to attend the St. Andrew's Day Ball, the greatest social function of the year. I went and found a brilliant assembly of fully 1,000 people. The success did great credit to the less serious side of Scotch character.

VISIT TO KANG-YU-WEI

I paid a visit to Kang-yu-Wei, the Chinese reformer whose life the British saved, and who had then recently returned from Japan.

I found him at the top of a house with two Sikhs on guard below. He is living under British protection, but dare not go out for fear of being kidnapped by the Chinese. He is a young man of thirty-five or forty, speaks with brightness, animation, and intelligence, but does not strike one as possessing that force of character or commanding ability calculated to make him a powerful leader of men. He is loyal to the deposed Emperor, and says that the Dowager Empress is in the hands of Russia, and that any statement that she is anti-Russian and in favour of reform is untrue, and only made to throw dust into the eyes of opponents. He thinks the party of reform in China is strong if only they had an opportunity of demonstrating it. He regards Jung Lu, the head of the Chinese army at Pekin, as at present all-powerful.

We had an unclouded sky every day, and a cool north-east monsoon steadily blowing.

On Saturday, December 2, I left in the splendid 6,000-ton mail steamer 'Annam' (French) for Saigon, the capital of French Indo-China.

CHAPTER XII

FAREWELL TO CHINA

On leaving Hong Kong I bade farewell to China, where I had learnt and seen, in three and a half months of travel and inquiry, much that was novel and interesting, and where I had gathered commercial and political information from the men on the spot, which I hope will prove of use to me in my efforts to promote the upholding and extension of British trade in the Far East.

I shall never be able to repay the European residents for their generous and hearty hospitality, or for all they did to facilitate the objects of my visit. I have also warmly to acknowledge the invariable courtesy and willingness to give all possible assistance on the part of Chinese officials in every city and district through which I passed in the course of my extended journey. It is largely due to the help I received on all hands that in so short a time I have traversed over 5,000 miles on the inland waterways of China, and also visited most of the great centres of commercial and political interest throughout the Empire. I desire in no sense to pose as an authority on China, but rather as one in possession of the

best and most accurate information carefully collected from the best-informed men on the spot.

To me it has been an educational trip of considerable value, and I have pursued the task I imposed upon myself with zest and satisfaction.

FRENCH INDO-CHINA

Now I will give some account of my visit to Saigon, the capital of French Indo-China, which is situated in Cochin-China. The s.s. 'Annam' was a top-heavy boat, and she rolled tremendously, though the north-east monsoon was not blowing unusually strong; writing was impossible. We had a cosmopolitan lot of passengers, though only forty in number French, Germans, Russians, Swiss, Americans, English, Japanese, and Chinese.

SAIGON AND CHOLON

We reached the mouth of the Saigon River in about thirty-four hours, and had to go fifty miles up it before we reached Saigon. On looking out I could have imagined myself in France. The style of the place is purely French. There are boulevards with avenues of trees and cafés and fine public buildings. It is the French military centre, and has extensive yards and departments in connection with the different branches of their military and naval forces. There are 1,000 French soldiers and a large force of Annamites under French officers. The town is built on a flat marshy plain, and the climate is deadly. The heat was great and mosquitoes simply swarmed.

It was amusing to see hundreds of lizards clinging to the tops of verandahs and the ceilings of rooms busily engaged in killing off mosquitoes.

I visited the public gardens and zoological gardens combined, which are fine, and contain a great variety of tropical trees and plants.

I drove out five miles to Cholon—a new Chinese town—behind a pair of the tiniest Burmese ponies, which got over the ground very rapidly. The French have made most excellent roads in and around Saigon. Cholon is laid out with broad well-made streets, kept perfectly clean, but the houses were poor. I called on Dock Phu, the Prefect, who showed me his large collection of carved and inlaid work and other curios. He is a rich man, but with ill-gotten gains, obtained from the French as a reward for the assistance he gave them in taking possession of his country.

FRENCH INDO-CHINA AND THE PROTECTIVE SYSTEM

The French possessions in the East, known as French Indo-China, comprise Cochin-China, taken 1857–60; Annam, added subsequently; a protectorate over Cambodia; also the province of Tonquin, forcibly taken from under the protection of China. The population of the whole is probably about ten millions. The native race, except in Tonquin, is Annamite. They are a dirty, lazy, and ignorant people, much inferior to the Chinese. Cochin-China is a rich rice-growing country, and has a large

surplus of revenue over expenditure, despite its array of highly paid French officials. There are deficits in Cambodia, Annam, and Tonquin, which are more than met by Cochin-China.

To show what happens wherever France gains control over territory, and imposes her protective system, we have an object-lesson in connection with her Indo-China. In 1885 no less than seven-eighths of the imports came from England, Germany, and Switzerland, but owing to duties put on in favour of France, and ranging up to as high as 50 per cent., three-fourths of the imports now come from France and only one-fourth from the rest of the world. Does not this show that my strong warnings as to the absolute necessity of our firmly maintaining our just and equal right to trade in Szechuan, Yunnan, Kwang-si, and Kwang-tung are well founded? That France is working might and main to acquire predominant influence in those great and rich provinces of China, with a view to ultimate annexation, is undoubted. Should she be allowed to accomplish her designs, then good-bye to British trade in those regions also.

FRENCH ACTIVITY AND BRITISH INACTIVITY

France is pushing her railways up both towards Yunnan, with the ultimate intention of penetrating to the rich province of Szechuan, and also up to Nanning-fu, on the West River. She is building three river gunboats to patrol the West River; and instead of playing at the repression of piracy, as we

are doing, she will probably adroitly use piratical attacks as a pretext for entering into military occupation of the country. Meantime, our Government pursues its policy of humiliation and drift, allowing France to disregard the treaty of 1896 without a protest, and making no genuine attempt to come to an understanding which would secure the equitable and reasonable rights of both nations.

CLIMATE OF SAIGON

How bad the climate of Saigon must be is seen by the enormous hospital, with 1,500 beds for Europeans only. It was nearly full at this the healthiest season of the year, though the European population is not over 10,000. Dysentery is the prevailing epidemic. They have four resident and eight visiting doctors, a Pasteur Institute, and Dr. Simon is there studying the plague. Their infectious wards are steel frames filled in with bamboo, which is burnt after each case. They have no trained nurses, but Sisters of Mercy undertake the work of nursing. There is a hospital for natives. The French deserve the highest credit for the excellence of their hospital arrangements.

We took on board twenty-five French military and naval officers at Saigon, and I saw signs of their virulent anti-English feeling. They simply gloated over the British reverses in the Transvaal, taking care to talk loudly about them when Englishmen were near, and the word 'Fashoda' was frequently brought in. They hate us with a petty sort of hatred, and are

chafing under a desire to have a go at us, which they hardly feel able to gratify. There is little doubt that the possibility of an attack on England by France has been much lessened by their determination to let nothing interfere with the success of the Paris Exhibition.

The steamer was well fitted, but we were treated like a lot of children. The French are steeped in red tape—rules, regulations, and officialism—to the most absurd extent. They will not oblige you in the smallest matter if contrary to some rule. I never wish to travel on a French boat again, and but for the indifference of our P. and O. Co. in not putting on up-to-date boats, and plenty of them, it would not be necessary.

In the early morning of December 8 we quietly steamed into the harbour of Singapore, situated on the island of that name, and a possession of the British Crown. It is the chief town of the Malay Peninsula under British rule.

On landing at Singapore I was shocked to find that the Governor, to whom I had a letter of introduction from Mr. Chamberlain, had just been buried. On Wednesday he presided at a meeting of the Council, and on Friday he was under the sod as the result of an apoplectic seizure.

SINGAPORE

The town of Singapore has about 184,000 inhabitants, mainly Chinese. It is only two degrees north of the Equator.

There is of course no spring, summer, autumn, or winter in the Malay Peninsula. The days are practically of the same length all the year round, and the temperature does not vary more than 15 deg. between the hottest and coldest days—ranging from 75 to 90 deg. in the shade. It has a very moist climate—the rainfall at Singapore is fully 100 inches, and at Penang and other places further north about 110 inches per annum.

Alligators abound in its waters, frequently snapping up unwary travellers on the river banks. Tigers are also numerous: I saw a ferocious tiger in a cage on a coffee plantation which had been trapped close by a few weeks before.

The public gardens at Singapore are large and well kept—they contain all kinds of tropical trees, palms, and plants, also a small collection of animals. I received a hearty welcome from Mr. St. Clair, of the 'Singapore Free Press,' and Mr. Butt, manager Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, who was my host.

MALAY PENINSULA

The Malay Peninsula consists of what are known as the Straits Settlements, Singapore, Malacca (a province which we got from the Dutch in exchange for Sumatra), the territory and island of Dingdings, the island of Penang, and province of Wellesley. Then we have a protectorate over four States—Selangor, Perak, Pahang, and Negri Sembilan, with Residents and a Resident General—and lastly there is the State of Johore, adjacent to Singapore, under

an independent Sultan, who takes care not to do anything we disapprove of. The area of the whole is about 40,000 square miles, and the total population slightly over a million.

The greater part of the country is dense jungle, and its prosperity has arisen from the discovery of tin. No less than two-thirds of the whole world's production of tin is mined here. The price has recently been 135*l.* a ton, and it is still over 100*l.* This is a source of great wealth. The mining is carried on mainly by the industrious, plodding Chinese: the Malays are too lazy to undertake such work.

VISIT TO SELANGOR

I went by steamer to Klangon, the coast of Selangor, and by rail to Kuala-Lumpor, where I had a hearty welcome from Col. Walker, the Resident. While there I visited the mines. The tin ore is found in a bed of gravel, covering a large area of plains adjacent to rivers. This must have been washed down from the mountains during countless ages, and there has accumulated on the top of it other material and soil from 10 to 150 feet thick. This over-burden is bared up to 30 feet, and over that thickness the gravel bed is reached by shafts. The gravel has been known to contain 10 per cent. of tin, but 1 per cent. would be nearer an average yield. The gravel is washed in rushing water; the tin, being the heaviest material, sinks to the bottom, and a second washing leaves a deposit with nearly 70 per cent. of tin in it.

KUALA-KUBU

From Kuala-Lumpor the Resident took me in his private saloon by rail to Kuala-Kubu, forty miles off. It is a charming little spot, with lovely tropical flowers, trees, and palms, and surrounded by granite mountains 3,500 feet high covered by forests right to their summit. There is an excellently appointed hospital for the free use of the native population. I drove fifteen miles farther up a mountain pass to see the magnificent forests and the marvellously luxuriant growth of jungle.

Roads superior to those we usually have in England have been built through the dense jungle in all directions, and splendid cycling tours, amid tropical scenery for hundreds of miles, can now be enjoyed which were impossible a few years ago. The construction of railways is being pushed on rapidly, with rails, engines, and engineering work all supplied from England. The Selangor railways pay 7½ per cent. and the Perak 4½ per cent. per annum. All the railways belong to the State. Before many years are over it will be possible to go by rail from Penang in the north to Singapore in the south.

A new port, with landing-stages of British-made steel joists and girders, is being constructed about five miles down the river from Klang at a cost of half a million sterling.

ADVANTAGE OF BRITISH RULE

Under British rule there is security for life and property where there were originally only nests of

pirates, and as the result we have the great prosperity which this fair region of the earth is now enjoying.

The majority of the inhabitants are Chinese, and we have proved that with just government they make excellent citizens--sober, industrious, and intelligent. The only thing we have to guard against is the formation of secret societies.

KUALA-LUMPOR

This town is a perfect wonder. It is provided with all the advantages and refinements of civilisation. The public offices are combined in a splendid edifice of granite, and in front of this is a capital cricket and football ground. The Residency is a spacious dwelling on the top of a hill commanding a charming view over lovely undulating well-wooded country.

The Resident sent me back to Singapore in the Government yacht 'Esmeralde,' which was placed at my disposal--a very delightful and luxurious mode of travelling to which I did not at all object. The passage occupied twenty hours. Each of the Malay States has a yacht for the use of its officials.

There are a number of coffee plantations. I spent one night at Tim Tailey's bungalow in order to go over his plantation, which is the most perfectly cultivated in the Peninsula. It extends over 1,000 acres, and has indiarubber trees planted between the rows of coffee bushes.

The coffee bush has shining evergreen leaves, and on the same branch you find the flower, and also the cherries in three stages of growth. When the berry is turning red (which has caused it to be called a cherry) it is ready for gathering.

In this climate gathering goes on all the year round.

I saw the berries automatically fed into a pulping machine, which sends out a constant stream denuded of the outer shell. These are fermented for three days in cisterns, then washed and taken to a drying machine—a huge cylinder heated by hot air to a temperature of 225°, which revolves rapidly. When dry they are transported to a hulling machine, which removes a second shell. A further thin coating has also to be shed by mechanical assistance, and then, after all the bad berries have been carefully picked out, the coffee is ready for the market. I am sorry to say that, notwithstanding the greatest enterprise and industry, coffee is so low in price that no profit can be made. We get the advantage in having, through stress of competition, our coffee at a very low price, but it is at present bad business for the coffee planter.

NATIONALISATION OF LAND AND MINERALS

I should have mentioned that the nationalisation of land and minerals in the Malay Peninsula is an accomplished fact. Land is rented from the Govern-

ment on long leases at a low rental, and on tin exported a duty has to be paid to the State varying according to the price realised. It is now about 13 per cent. A rich gold mine is being worked in Pahang on the same terms, and more are likely to be opened.

It was a virgin country with impenetrable jungle for the most part, with no surface owners practically, and this enabled the running of it on ideal lines by the Government's assuming the ownership.

There are only about 1,000 British troops at Singapore. Colonel Walker, my host at Kuala-Lumpor, commands a regiment of Indian Sikhs, known as the Malay Guides, for service in the four Malay States. I went over the barracks and saw the men paraded: they are a fine body of men, their average height being 5ft. 9¼in. They are capital shots, and I could not help regretting that it is inadvisable to have their assistance in South Africa.

We had an excursion from Kuala-Lumpor to the Batu Caves, nine miles away. They are in a huge cliff of limestone bleached white and surrounded and crowned by forests. Passing through an outer cave, where huge stalactites hang from the roof, you enter an inner cave with a dome like that of a cathedral hundreds of feet high, with small orifices to the sky. There are immense pillars of stalactite from bottom to roof of the cave, formed by the dripping of limestone water through countless ages. A pulpit-shaped rock at one side helps to complete the illusion

that you are in a sacred edifice, and not gazing on Nature's own handiwork.

The colouring of the walls—a variety of greens, browns, and greys—adds to the beauty. Beyond the dome is another cave, almost entirely open to the heavens except for its curving sides. Trees and luxuriant creepers grow around the top and down one side. It is a charming example of rock and cave scenery.

JOHORE

Mr. Butt drove Mr. Keswick (my host at Hong Kong, whom I was glad to see again) and myself right across the island of Singapore, through beautiful jungle, twelve miles to the narrow straits separating it from the native State of Johore. Here we found one of the Sultan's boats awaiting us, and were soon landed at the city of Johore, with its fine mosque and Sultan's palace. The Sultan was away at Calcutta, but we called on the Prime Minister, a pucka Malay and a handsome and intelligent man.

We were entertained at tiffin at the club, and driven in carriages all round the place. Johore is famous for its pineapples, thousands of acres being devoted to their growth. The present price is one farthing each. They are canned, and the profit obtained by the canning firms must be enormous. Johore State is rich in tin, and its financial condition is improving every year. Nearly all the heads of departments are Englishmen.

The city of Singapore is interesting on account of its cosmopolitan population, comprising Chinese, Eurasians, Achinese, Boyanese, Dyaks, Javanese, Malays, Manilamen, Annamese, Arabs, Armenians, Tamils, Japanese, Jews, Persians, Siamese, Cinghalese, Africans, and Aborigines, in addition to Europeans of different nationalities. As a practical proof of the progress and prosperity of the Malay Peninsula, I may cite the fact that in twenty-four years the revenue has grown from under two to over fifteen millions of dollars.

The chief exports are tin, gutta-percha, coffee, hides, sago, tapioca, pepper, nutmegs, indiarubber, mother of pearl, gum, copal, rice, sugar, and cocoa. The imports include cotton goods, coal, hardware, cutlery, paper, tobacco, wheat, flour, petroleum, and railway material. The value of exports and imports is rapidly rising year by year.

Sir Alexander Swettenham has been sworn in Acting Governor. I lunched with him, and had a chat on affairs generally.

SIAM

I had thought of going up to Bankok, the capital of Siam, but, unfortunately, boats did not run so as to admit of it in the time at my disposal. Admiral Seymour had just arrived from Bankok in the 'Centurion,' so the Governor sent me out in a steam launch to learn from the Admiral what he found to be the position of affairs in Siam.

This country adjoins both British Burma and our Malay States, and the aggressiveness of the French, if successful, will injure our commercial interests. All we want is a free and independent Siam with equal rights to trade in it, whilst I fear the ambition of France is to absorb and annex the whole country. I gathered that the French are quiet for the moment, so far as the seizure of fresh territory is concerned, and are busily engaged in digesting that which they compelled the Siamese to surrender to them three or four years ago. On the other hand the Russians have a secret agent in Bankok, who is actively intriguing to gain influence. It is supposed they desire a coaling station which would only be of service in case of conflict with Great Britian in India or the East.

SINGAPORE TO COLOMBO

I was to leave Singapore for Colombo at noon by the magnificent new 11,000-ton North German Lloyd steamer the 'König Albrecht.' The Admiral offered to send me in his launch, and mine was ordered ashore. We discovered they had not transferred my baggage, so a stern chase began, which finally resulted in our overhauling her and afterwards reaching the 'König Albrecht' five minutes before her advertised time of starting.

DECADENCE OF BRITISH SHIPPING

I notice with anxiety the decadence of British shipping so far as passenger steamers to the Far

East are concerned. Formerly we had practically the monopoly; now the Germans, French, and Japanese have splendid vessels, and are successfully competing with us. The Americans are also building several magnificent steamers.

CHAPTER XIII

SINGAPORE TO COLOMBO

It took us a few hours under five days to traverse the 2,000 miles of sea between Singapore and Colombo—first up the Straits of Malacca and then almost due west across the Indian Ocean. The sea was like a millpond all the way, and our huge floating palace, the 'König Albrecht,' was as steady as a rock. It was very hot, and the cabins were suffocating and sleepless abodes. Over and over again I had to turn out and walk the deck in the middle of the night to try and induce sleep. Some compensation was got by enjoying the glorious flood of moonlight from a full moon.

PENANG

We coasted up Perak to Penang, where we landed for a few hours. It is a small town with an unimportant trade. I drove out four miles to see the fine public gardens, encircled by densely wooded slopes, several hundreds of feet high, in the centre of which is a waterfall. The gardens are well kept, and contain a great variety of tropical trees and plants.

ISLAND OF SUMATRA

On our left for many hours we had the eastern shores of the Island of Sumatra close to us. There were no signs of towns or villages, but mountainous densely wooded jungle everywhere. On the western slopes tobacco, coffee, &c., are grown extensively. We handed over Sumatra to the Dutch, who have had, and still have, continuous fighting with the native Achinese, whom they have not yet subdued.

GERMAN SHIPBUILDING

A generation ago we built the greater part of the ships required by Germany—now they construct all their own. The 'König Albrecht' was built at Stettin, and the workmanship and material seemed excellent. There were over thirty German naval and military officers on board, including old General Wolff. They were very friendly, and I talked over the military situation in South Africa freely with them, and got some ideas worth consideration when the time comes for discussing the vital question of the reorganisation of our military system.

CEYLON

It was pleasant and interesting to revisit Ceylon after an interval of seven years in order to study the progress made in this, one of the fairest islands of the earth. It contains a population of about 3½ millions of picturesque people of various nationalities, and has an area of some 26,000 square miles.

Colombo, where I landed, is on a flat plain covered with cocoanut trees, and has an artificially made harbour, to which I shall refer later. The population has now reached 150,000—an increase of about 20,000 since my previous visit. As a practical proof of its prosperity I may mention the fact that a few days ago a plot of land of a little over an acre, in the heart of the business quarter, sold for 17,000*l.*

I need not say more about the history of Ceylon than to recall that the Portuguese took possession of Colombo and the low country in 1517. The Dutch appeared off the island in 1602, and by alliance with the King of Kandy gradually ousted the Portuguese —capturing Colombo in 1656, and subsequently other places. In 1796, when Holland had been overrun and occupied by the French, Colombo was surrendered to the British, and we afterwards gained possession of the whole island. There are many inhabitants with more or less Portuguese blood in their veins, and also 22,000 pure Burghers, who show how little they appreciate the equal rights and privileges we have so freely accorded them by refusing to contribute one farthing towards our Patriotic Fund, and by gloating over our reverses in South Africa.

On arrival I found an invitation from Mr. and Mrs. Willis—the lady being the daughter of Mr. T. Baldwin, of Barnsley—kindly asking me to spend Christmas with them in their bungalow in the lovely Peradeniya Gardens. Mr. Willis is the chief director in charge of the five Government Botanical

Gardens in Ceylon, which do much to promote the planting of the sorts of fruits and trees and other plants likely to do well in the climate of Ceylon.

PERADENIYA AND ITS GARDENS

To get to Peradeniya—which is about 1,600 feet above the sea—I had a four hours' journey by rail—a lovely route through woodland tropical vegetation, and then winding up rocky slopes with paddy fields in the hollows. Palms, tree-ferns, and bananas abounded. One flower like a double marigold was growing in the greatest profusion. It is called the lantana, and is said to have been introduced by the wife of one of the Governors, and now it threatens to overrun the island. A sort of sunflower has recently begun to oust it, and wherever that appears the lantana is killed.

We inspected the gardens several times. They cover 150 acres, and are park-like in parts, and tropical in character at other points. There are about 6,000 species of trees, shrubs, and plants growing in this one garden. Amongst these I observed the orchid tree, of great size, with evergreen leaves and lovely clusters of salmon-coloured flowers just like orchids; the palm-oil palm, cabbage palm, palmetto (Panama hats); nutmeg tree with dark evergreen leaves rather resembling the laurel, but not so shining—the fruit is like a peach, with one nutmeg inside, which has mace half enclosing it; the allspice tree, with barkless stems and evergreen leaves, which contain the allspice; cloves,

grown on a large evergreen tree. The cocoa bush (introduced from South Africa) is evergreen, and has immense leaves, often one foot long. The pods contain thirty or forty nibs. I gathered some leaves from the cocaine bush (from Peru); the cocaine is extracted from the leaves, which are not evergreen. There were fine indiarubber trees with immense roots twisting all round largely above ground, and just like huge snakes. Then there was the upas tree, tall, with its minute leaves, to sleep under the shade of which is said to be certain death; the Dorian tree, with its pungent-smelling fruit (from Malay States); the bread-fruit tree, with enormous leaves handsomely scalloped and of a lovely colour (the fruit is much like the Jack fruit); an evergreen creeper producing pepper; vanilla flavouring from vanilla beans 4 or 5 inches long—a kind of orchid; the talipot palm, which throws out large white blossoms at the end of 40 to 50 years, and then dies; the lovely sago palm (the sago is extracted from the interior of the centre stem); and the cinnamon tree, the bark of which furnishes the spice.

There were also clumps of bamboos 130 feet high and 9 inches diameter of stem, and coffee and tea plants, the sugar cane, and camphor, banana, mango, orange, and many other fruit trees.

There was a curious plant in the lawns, the leaves of which close up immediately you touch them, and do not open again for ten or fifteen minutes. I shall never forget the lovely avenue of crotons and palms.

THE MUSEUM

I examined the collection of woods in the museum. The heart only of the ebony tree is black. The calamander is as hard and expensive as ebony, but more like mahogany in colour. The palmyra wood is extremely hard and heavy. The satin wood is just like satin in appearance. The medum wood is hard and beautifully marked. The wood of the kos, or Jack fruit, tree is hard and much used for building purposes. The wood of the sappoo is excellent for water-casks and wheels. A curious feature that I noticed is that nearly every trunk has cracks in the centre.

CHRISTMAS IN CEYLON

It did not seem like Christmas, all surrounded by tropical trees and plants and flowers; but it made me feel less of a stranger in a strange land to spend Christmas Day with those who had mutual friends at home. I left the day after for Nuwara Eliya, a mountain sanatorium, 6,200 feet above the sea, to which I travelled by an attractive line of railway—except the last five miles, which were coached.

The railway lay through a country practically covered by tea plantations. I noticed a marvellous change in seven years. Then large portions of ground were unoccupied, and now hardly any. Australian trees of wonderfully rapid growth had been planted to break the wind, and for firewood, all over the district, and in five or six years had become quite large trees. The air grew fresher as

we ascended, and it was quite cold in driving from the railway terminus—Nauoya—up a ravine to Nuwara Eliya, which is lined by hills clothed for the most part with dense forests to their summit, forming fine scenery. I was elected an honorary member of the club—a lovely bungalow with flower-beds and lawn in front, and creepers covering the long low one-storied building; and there I found a room reserved for me. Nuwara Eliya had grown rapidly since I was there in 1893. It is in an open valley with well-timbered hills all around, some rising to over 8,000 feet. There is a lake, around which you get a good eight-mile constitutional on foot, on horseback, or on a bicycle. The climate is trying, and in the heat of the day the temperature in the sun is 120 degrees, whilst in the early morning there is hoar frost on the ground. I called on the Governor, Sir West Ridgway, and afterwards dined with him, going an hour earlier for a quiet talk on the affairs of Ceylon.

Since 1893 the railway forty miles farther on to Bandarawela has been completed. I went up to see the country. The line passes through dense forests, and down the ravines you see fine open rolling grass-covered country stretching far away. The railway does not do well yet, so far as goods or mineral traffic go.

AT A TEA PLANTATION

Leaving Nuwara Eliya, I travelled to Talawakelle to visit Mr. Fairhurst on his St. Andrews tea

plantation. This gentleman had called on me at Singapore, thinking I was his old schoolfellow, Joseph Walton, Q.C., and I afterwards found that, curiously, I had a letter of introduction to him from Sir Seymour King. No less than 54 per cent. of the exports of Ceylon now consist of tea; twenty-five years ago only a few pounds were grown. When I was here seven years ago the quantity produced had reached 76 million pounds a year, and now I found the year 1899 will give the stupendous and unprecedented total of 127,000,000 lbs. Tea has fallen from 1*s.* 2*d.* to 8*d.* per lb., average price, at Colombo in a few years, and even at that low price the Ceylon tea crop will fetch 4¼ million pounds sterling. The average cost is 6*d.* per lb., so that the producer is still doing well.

TEA FACTORY

I went over a tea factory to see the processes employed in the preparation of tea for the market. The leaves, known as the flush, are gathered about every ten days from each bush all the year round. These are placed on trays, formed of jute cloth stretched from wooden framework, to wither in a temperature of 75 degrees. They are usually left fifteen hours. Then the withered leaves are taken to the tea roller ('Economic' or 'Rapid,' both made in England), which is practically a grooved table on which a box is revolved (by machinery) containing tea pressed down on the grooves by a central weight. The rolled tea is conveyed to the roll breaker; this

consists of a box filled with tea in which spindles are revolved to break it up. The tea now passes on to a jigging sieve, through which the finest leaf falls. The rest is rolled again, and this process is repeated three or four times until 75 per cent. has passed through the sieve. Next comes fermentation, which is accomplished by spreading the small leaf on wooden tables to a depth of two inches, and covering it with a damp cloth for three to five hours. Experts know when fermentation has sufficiently taken place by the bright copper colour of the tea. After fermentation the tea passes on to a drying machine ('Desiccator' or 'Sirocco'), through which it is pushed, spread thinly on trays, in a temperature of 180 to 190 degrees, obtained by extracting hot air from a furnace by means of a fan. This is repeated twice. Now comes the sorting of grades, by putting the whole bulk of tea on jigging sieves with different-sized meshes, and three in number—one below the other. The finest or smallest tea is of the highest quality, and so on. When one grade of quality has accumulated in a bin until it is full the tea is well intermixed and passed through a firing machine again. After this it is packed warm and sent to market. Though the average price realised is about 8*d.* per lb., it varies from 6*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* according to quality. There are about 350,000 acres of land now devoted to the production of tea in Ceylon; and whilst one or two places produce 1,000 to 1,200 lbs. per acre, a fair average yield may be taken at 400 to 500 lbs. When last in Ceylon, if the Government

land sold to the planters brought 20*l.* an acre it was considered high; but recently estates have been transferred to limited liability companies on the basis, in several cases, of 100*l.* to 120*l.* per acre, which is a ridiculous price. Manures are now having to be applied to the land, and hence the cost of production will rise.

HADGALLA BOTANICAL GARDENS

I must not omit some reference to the fascinating Hadgalla Botanical Gardens, 5,600 feet above the sea, and the home of temperate plants, about six miles from Nuwara Eliya. They contain about 3,000 varieties and species, and occupy 30 acres of land in a charming situation. There is a precipice at the back, 1,400 feet high, and a rapid slope from the gardens down into a deep well-wooded valley, surrounded by broken mountains. Mr. Nock, who was there when I last went to Hadgalla, took me round again.

Amongst other flowers and plants were forget-me-nots, pinks, violets, pansies, daisies, dandelion, begonias, fuchsias, nasturtium, azaleas, poppies, Canterbury bells, gladioli, heliotrope, mignonette, primulas, abutilons, lilies, balsam, canariensis, honeysuckle, sweet-williams, foxgloves, wood-anemones, roses, cinerarias, verbenas, camelias, and a host of other flowers—all of which had previously been unknown in Ceylon, but which had been introduced, and in the month of December were all blooming in profusion. On the

other hand, in the same gardens were fine tree-ferns, the Abyssinian banana, maidenhair fern, and a great many other tropical trees and plants, including orchids, growing luxuriantly. The huge natural fernery contains 25,000 plants, and its cool nooks and corners were a marvel of refreshing beauty.

Mr. Nock told me that the reason why they can grow this extraordinary admixture of tropical and temperate plants is that they selected an elevation where they just avoid frosts. He said a leopard had attacked and carried off one of his calves a fortnight before.

COCOA-NUTS

Next to tea, the export of cocoa-nuts is the most important. Over $12\frac{1}{2}$ millions of cocoa-nuts were exported last year, mainly to England. The outer husk is full of fibre, known as coir fibre, which is made into mats, brushes, and ropes. The kernel, containing the oil, is partly sent to Europe dried (copra), and the oil is there extracted; but they also prepare the oil in Ceylon. They also make and export what is known as desiccated cocoa-nut for confectionery.

MINERAL WEALTH AND PRECIOUS STONES

Ceylon is not, so far as is known, rich in minerals—coal, lead, and copper not being found—but it produces a considerable quantity of graphite, or plumbago, which is largely used in the manufacture of metal-melting crucibles in England and the

United States of America. The price has risen from 25*l.* to 75*l.* a ton; and as the 1899 output is given out at 40,000 tons, it means a realised amount of no less than three millions sterling for this commodity alone. Precious stones, such as rubies, sapphires, and cat's-eyes, are found in Ceylon, and command extravagant prices, but the buyer sometimes finds he has had a crystal of glass palmed off as a real gem.

PEARL FISHERIES

The pearl fisheries of Ceylon are of great antiquity. After the British occupation, in the four years 1796 to 1799 the revenue from them was 234,000*l.* Since then there have been great blanks, but as an aggregate this 'harvest of the seas' has yielded us a million sterling. Pearl oysters have to be taken at their fourth or fifth year, and single pearls, if perfectly round, of large size, and of silky white lustre, command 200*l.* For eight years now there has been no fishery.

RAILWAYS

The railways of Ceylon are owned by the Government, and from 1862 to 1894 have made 42½ millions of rupees profit. After paying 17 millions interest and 9 millions to a sinking fund for extinction of debt they have left a balance of 20½ millions available for colonial purposes. The mileage now open is about 3,000, and the average profit runs nearly 7 per cent.

After my visit in 1893 I strongly advocated the construction of a railway from the present system right northwards to Jaffna—200 miles; and this, I am pleased to learn, is to be taken in hand next year. The estimate is 13 millions of rupees and 5 millions for the necessary adjunct of irrigation works. The country through which the railway will pass has, at present, little population, but in olden days it supported millions of people, and will do so again if its wonderful system of irrigation tanks be repaired. It will relieve India of some of its congested population. The line is to be 5 ft. 6 in. gauge, which I think is a mistake; 3ft. 3in. metre gauge would have been cheaper, and also better, as affording a greater likelihood of its ultimately being extended across Adam's Bridge to India, and connected with the metre gauge line now being built from Madura to Paumben.

There are two light hill railways also to be built this year—one, the Kelani Valley (50 miles), and the other the Uda Pussellawa.

The whole of the railway material and rolling-stock for these lines comes from England, and we shall therefore benefit by their construction; whilst this policy of vigorous development, for which Mr. Chamberlain deserves great credit, will be certain to increase the prosperity of Ceylon and the well-being of its population. Railways ought also to be built from Colombo to Chilaw, through densely populated country, and also, on strategic grounds, from some point on the line to Jaffna to Trincomalee, on the

east coast of the island, so as to establish land communication between our naval station and Colombo. Railway fares in Ceylon run $1\frac{1}{4}d.$ first, about $\frac{3}{4}d.$ second, less than $\frac{1}{2}d.$ third, and less than a farthing fourth class per mile.

COLOMBO HARBOUR WORKS.

Mr. Bostock took me over the new harbour works. The Colombo harbour is an artificially made one. A large breakwater, the foundation-stone of which was laid by the Prince of Wales in 1875, was built at a cost of 705,000*l.*, and the encircling of the roadstead is now being completed by two additional arms, estimated to cost 527,000*l.* When finished seventy large ships will be able to ride at anchor within in safety in all weathers. A first-class graving dock, capable of taking H.M.S. 'Renown,' is also in process of construction at a cost of 318,000*l.*, half of which will be contributed by the Admiralty. The total tonnage of the port of Colombo was 500,000 in 1879; it is now 6 million tons in and out annually, and the revenue will pay interest and extinguish debt in a reasonable number of years. The engineer first showed me the plans, and then took me on an engine to the point where the breakwater is now being built up from 30 feet below the surface of the water. They first deposit a quantity of rubble, and leave it for a monsoon season to consolidate. Then the placing on this foundation (they cannot get a natural one, as there is only deep sand) of huge 30-ton blocks of concrete begins. They are brought in a barge, and

an enormous crane, known as a Titan, which can pick up and place these blocks at any point within a radius of 60 feet, does its part of the work. Many divers are employed, who earn 250*l.* to 300*l.* a year. The concrete blocks are composed of five parts gneiss (the predominant rock of Ceylon), two parts sand, and one part Portland cement; they are made on the spot and are exceedingly hard. The Titan cost 11,000*l.*, and was built by an English engineering firm in Bath. There are 11 miles of railway and 10 locomotives in connection with the harbour works, and all were supplied from England.

TRADE, DEBT, TAXATION, AND REVENUE

In 1877 coffee formed 81 per cent. of the export trade of Ceylon, and though that has been absolutely extinguished, the exports of the island have been increased 50 per cent. in the last twenty years.

The debt of Ceylon is only about $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions sterling, or 1*l.* per head of its population. It is little more than two years' revenue, and, unlike our debt at home, is represented by revenue-producing assets owned by the State, such as railways, harbour works, post and telegraphs, land, &c., worth twice the amount.

With regard to taxation, in the country there is no local taxation, except a poll-tax of $1\frac{1}{2}$ rupee, which the natives can discharge by giving six days' labour on the roads. In the towns, cost of water, sanitation, police, and other expenses of local administration are met by a tax on rental—not ex-

ceeding, however, 11 per cent. The bulk of the revenue for imperial administration is got by taxes levied on imports, which amount to an average of 4*s.* 8*d.* per head of the population per annum, and at the end of this year the accumulated surpluses will amount to 6 millions of rupees, which are to be applied to partly constructing the Jaffna railway.

About two-thirds of the inhabitants are natives —Cinghalese, Kandyans, and Moormen; and there are nearly a million of Tamils, who have come over from India.

The Cinghalese are a somewhat effeminate race. The men wear large tortoise-shell combs, half encircling their heads, and have their hair in a knot at the back of the head. They are lazy and unreliable as a rule, also rather treacherous. The Tamils do practically all the hard work on the estates, in the mines, and on the railways.

There are extensive missions, carried on by the Wesleyans, the Church of England, and other societies. As in China and India, however, the Roman Catholics have by far the greatest hold on the people.

HOME THROUGH INDIA

I found I could return home through India in time for the opening of Parliament, and therefore decided to take steamer to Calcutta, go across India by rail, and embark for Europe at Bombay.

OBJECTS IN VIEW

I had two objects in view in paying this flying visit to India: 1st, to bring the railway information collected in 1892–93 up to date; and, 2nd, to have an opportunity of discussing the political and commercial situation in the Far East with the Viceroy.

As Lord Curzon was Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, I was brought more into political relations with him on the China question during my first session in Parliament than is usual. He has travelled extensively in the East, and I felt it would be interesting to exchange views with him.

To show how railway extension affects British trade, I may mention that the steamer to Calcutta carried 2,000 tons of railway material from England, also 1,000 tons Manchester piece-goods. The railways enable the export of the produce of the country, and British piece-goods and other goods are taken in exchange.

CHAPTER XIV

INDIA

Before deciding to return home through India I had exchanged two cablegrams with England, in order to ascertain when Parliament would meet. The reply was : 'Date not fixed, think probably about 20th February.' I was, therefore, much surprised to have it wired the day after I reached Calcutta that the House was summoned for January 30.

On arrival at Calcutta I put up at the Bengal Club, of which I had been elected an honorary member ; but as soon as the Viceroy heard I had come he kindly wrote offering me the hospitality of Government House, adding that this would give us opportunities of discussing my experiences in the Far East. I accepted the invitation so cordially given, and had a most interesting and instructive visit.

A HARD-WORKING VICEROY

The little glimpse I had of how the hours of the day, and also of the night, were occupied showed me that in Lord Curzon we have a hard-working Viceroy, who is willingly devoting all his powers in

the promotion of the progress and prosperity of the nearly 300 millions of people in our great Indian Empire. The Viceroy is bound to discharge many social duties, which take up time, and the result is that he is usually working at his desk till two o'clock every morning. As Viceroy, Lord Curzon knows no politics, and it was a pleasure to me to find that one who was always a courteous political opponent at home is popular with the natives of India, who much appreciate his devotion to public duty. I sincerely trust that his term of office will be distinguished by a great advance in the moral and material well-being of the people.

RAILWAYS IN INDIA

The Viceroy is just as keen as I am that India should have her railway system extended adequately to the needs of the country, and that the construction of irrigation works should proceed simultaneously. When travelling in 1892–93 in India and Burma I tabulated 10,000 miles of urgently needed railway extensions. I now went through that list with Sir Arthur Trevor, the Public Works representative on the Legislative Council, and Mr. Upcott, Secretary for Public Works, to see how many of the proposed railways had been built or were at present under construction. I was much gratified to find that since the end of 1893 over 4,000 additional miles of railway have been constructed and opened up to March 31 last, including several of the projects I so

strongly advocated in the series of addresses I gave after my return home. In addition there are 3,568 miles still under construction or sanctioned. In the last five years, therefore, they have been laying down railways at the rate of about 800 miles a year, which is a considerable increase on the average of previous years, but does not by any means meet the necessities of the country. Now I am told that, owing to the large expenditure on famine relief, railway construction will practically be stopped this year. This, I urged upon the Viceroy, is a mistaken policy. The railways of India paid on an average 5·37 per cent. last year, including military and famine lines. Many of the projects sanctioned are certain to pay well, and will be of incalculable benefit to India, lessening the chance of a recurrence of famine by increasing the trade and the prosperity of the people, especially if accompanied by the construction of irrigation works.

The financial position of India is excellent. She has no National Debt in the same sense as ours, for it is more than covered by revenue-producing assets, such as railways, irrigation works, posts, telegraphs, and land revenues. India could, therefore, readily raise on favourable terms any reasonable amount for the special work of extending the railway system. To place the Government of India in a position to do this the railway accounts must be separated from the general finances, and this I shall strongly advocate at home, in the interests of India and England alike, for the more India is enabled to export of what we

require, the more of our manufactured goods she will take in return.

INTERVIEWS

I had interviews with Sir John Woodburn, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal; General Gaselee, the Quartermaster-General charged with the movement of troops and commissariat, and now commanding a Division in China; Mr. Douglas, the manager of the East Indian Railway, and many others, including several natives, for the purpose of gathering accurate information which may prove of value.

THE DINNER OF THE BISHOPS

One night at Government House I had the honour of meeting no fewer than nine bishops of the Church of England at dinner. It was, indeed, a clerical atmosphere, but it was pleasant to see that High, Low, and Broad Church alike could cease their religious controversies and enjoy themselves around the hospitable table of the Viceroy.

ADMIRAL BOSANQUET

The Viceroy and Lady Curzon took me with them to call on Admiral Bosanquet on board the cruiser 'Eclipse.' We went all over her, and were shown guns similar to those taken up to Ladysmith by the Naval Brigade from the 'Powerful.'

THE FAMINE AND PLAGUE

The present condition of India is a sad contrast to what I saw seven years ago. Then there was no famine; now a huge area with over 50 millions of people is suffering from failure of crops. There has practically been no rain during 1899, and, to make matters worse, the crops largely failed in the five preceding years also.

A small but rapidly diminishing number of people still doubt the benefit to the native population in India of British rule. Law and order, security for life and property, in place of constant lawlessness, anarchy, and bloodshed, have resulted from the administration of India by Britishers for over forty years. Formerly famines claimed their millions of victims, but now, though severe famine afflicts the land, few lack the food necessary to preserve life and health. Over two millions of people are in receipt of relief at the present time. The adults are employed on public works as far as possible and paid in cash, but the little children assemble at various points by hundreds, with their basins, and consume substantial meals.

In the 1,400 miles journey across India from Calcutta to Bombay—which I did in forty-three hours in a direct train—I passed through a good deal of the famine area, and it was pitiable to see the arid and absolutely burnt-up condition of the country. Given rain, it is a garden—without rain, a desert. A more patient, unmurmuring population could not be

found; but they are too lethargic, and submit to what they regard as the inevitable, without making a vigorous effort to avert it. It is impossible to irrigate a considerable portion of the famine area, in consequence of the absence of rivers, but something more might be done by the careful storage of water when the rains come.

The plague is devastating another large district of India. In Bombay alone there are over 200 deaths daily, and for the next three months a rapid increase is almost certain. All my clothes will have to be disinfected before they will allow me to land at Marseilles. Our English idea is to interfere as little as possible with the habits and customs of the natives, and to a large extent this is a sound policy; but, in view of the great spread of epidemics arising from the insanitary condition of the native quarters, it would seem to be the duty of the State to insist upon the surroundings of the people being improved. The natives resist all changes for their benefit most tenaciously. Their only desire is to be left to live as their forefathers have done before them, in miserable dwellings with filthy surroundings, a danger to themselves and the whole community. They have absolutely no fear of death, and will without hesitation sleep on a spot where a plague patient has just died. How to improve matters is the great and difficult problem which the authorities in India have now to solve.

LOYALTY OF NATIVES

The loyalty of the natives of India has been remarkably demonstrated in connection with our South African difficulties. Offers of assistance have come from all quarters, and there has been much disappointment at the decision of the Imperial Government not to employ native troops.

INDIA AND CHINA

It is not easy to compare India and China. There is a much greater variety of races in the former than in the latter, as well as decidedly greater diversity as regards physique, education, and civilisation. Some of the races of India are quite equal to the Chinese, but the majority are inferior. The Chinese were a civilised people 2,000 years ago, when the inhabitants of the British Isles were barbarians. China enjoys a better climate than India, and is richer agriculturally; its people, generally speaking, are more industrious and have stronger commercial instincts. Whilst, therefore, we should do all in our power to increase the trade between Great Britain and our Indian Empire, the fact still remains that China is the neutral market which offers the greatest possibilities for trade expansion, and where our commercial rights should be resolutely upheld.

FREE TRADE IN INDIA AND CHINA

To my mind, if there is one thing more than another in connection with the administration of our

great Indian Empire of which we have reason to be proud, it is the fact that though we have expended enormous sums of money and shed our blood in its acquisition, yet we pursue the just policy of leaving the teeming millions free to buy whatever they need to import in the cheapest and best market, quite irrespective of whether it is the British market or not. Throwing open India, as we thus do, equally to the trade of all nations immensely strengthens the reasonable and equitable demand which we make, that the great neutral market of China shall remain open to everybody on equal terms and conditions.

HOMEWARD BOUND

I embarked on the s.s. 'Carthage' at Bombay on January 20, and transhipped into the s.s. 'Australia' five days later at Aden, and now, on January 29, we are quietly passing up the great artificial waterway connecting the Mediterranean with the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean—the Suez Canal. We have had lovely weather and a good passage.

It is with real pleasure that I feel myself, after my long journeyings, homeward bound, and within measurable distance of the shores of Old England.

I have now only to traverse the Mediterranean from Port Said to Marseilles, and then proceed by rail through France to Calais. If all goes well I hope to arrive in London eight or nine days hence.

In concluding the last of my hurriedly written communications, I will only say that it has been a satisfaction to me to thus keep in touch with my

friends during my long absence. I shall feel amply repaid if I have in any degree succeeded in arousing a greater interest on their part in the countries where I have travelled, and especially if I have deepened their conviction as to the vast importance of upholding and extending our just commercial rights in the Far East.

STATEMENT MADE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

On March 30, 1900[1]

BRITISH, COMMERCIAL, AND POLITICAL INTERESTS IN CHINA

Mr. Speaker, I desire to call the attention of the House to the failure of Her Majesty's Government to uphold British commercial and political interests in China. Though I have recently made extensive journeys in that country, I do not claim to pose as an authority on Chinese affairs, but I rather propose to make a statement as to the present situation, based on information obtained from the best-informed men upon the spot. I make no apology for recalling the attention of the House to the necessity for the initiation by Her Majesty's Government of a more definite and vigorous policy in the Far East if our commercial and political interests are to be maintained. I am aware how entirely absorbed the public mind is by what has been transpiring in South Africa for some time past, but I venture to submit that we should be unworthy of the great im-

[1] Reprinted from *Hansard*.

perial responsibilities which rest upon our shoulders were we to allow the affairs, however important, of any one part of our Empire to monopolise our attention to the serious neglect of vital interests in other parts of the world. Nor is it unsuitable, Mr. Speaker, to review the situation in China because of the agreeable way in which public attention has again been directed to the affairs of that Empire by the signal success of American diplomacy, which has resulted in the assent of England, Germany, France, Russia, Japan, and Italy to the principle of equality of customs tariff and of harbour dues and equality of railway rates being maintained in China. The advantages conferred by this undertaking are to be common to all States and all peoples, and our kinsmen across the Atlantic are to be warmly congratulated on the success which attended their efforts.

The commercial community in this country are deeply indebted to the United States Government for having thus ensured equality of opportunity for British trade as well as their own. How far Her Majesty's Government ought to be congratulated on the part they played in this matter has not yet been fully disclosed, but I hope that not only were Her Majesty's Government the first to give assent to the proposals, but that they, so far as it was judicious, gave their active co-operation in the endeavour to secure the carrying through of the arrangement. I am aware that, in view of the jealousy recently exhibited towards us by foreign Powers, the United

States Government were probably able to succeed where we should have failed; and, indeed, any interference on our part might have defeated our object. It is with great satisfaction I notice that not only is there to be equality in the matter of customs tariff and harbour dues, but equality also of railway rates. The assurance in regard to the latter is of the utmost value, and it was one which the British Government failed to secure in the Anglo-Russian Agreement.

I will now turn to what I found to be the position of affairs in North China. The seizure of Port Arthur by Russia is somewhat ancient history, and I will not refer further to that subject than to say that the people in the East most likely to know unanimously state that no one was so much surprised as were the Russians themselves at being allowed to take Port Arthur. Russia has already made Port Arthur impregnable by new forts practically encircling it, and in August last she had no fewer than 40,000 troops at Port Arthur and Talienwan. There were also Russian soldiers at the railway stations on her Manchurian lines. She is in military occupation of that huge country of Manchuria, rich in agriculture, in minerals, and fisheries, and with emphatically a white man's climate. Even at Newchwang, the only treaty port through which we can now trade, Russian Cossacks had been policing the town on the invitation, forsooth, of the British Consul. On the north bank of the river at Newchwang there is a Russian concession of several square

miles, on which one terminus of her railway is being built, and over which she enjoys quasi-sovereign rights. Not content with this acquisition, Russia is negotiating for a further concession on the south side of the river, opposite Newchwang and adjacent to the terminus of the Newchwang Extension Line from Shanhaikwan, obviously with the intention of bridging the river and linking up her Manchurian railways, including that from Port Arthur, where her troops are concentrated, with the line leading via Tientsin to Pekin, which no doubt she will ultimately acquire by advancing to the Chinese Government the money to pay off the British bondholders, unless much greater determination be shown by the British Government in resisting aggressions certain to strangle British trade in the future. On this Newchwang Extension Line is the treaty port of Chinwangtao, the opening of which was announced by Her Majesty's Government as a diplomatic triumph. This port I visited, and to my surprise I found there was no natural harbour, but only an open bay surrounded by sandhills; no sign of population, except a few fishermen's cottages; and no trade. All the best-informed commercial men agree that it is an act of folly to spend money on Chinwangtao, and that the improvement of the approaches to the ports of Tientsin and Newchwang at each end of the line ought rather to have been sought.

Perhaps the most unaccountable action on the

part of the British Government, so far as Russia is concerned, was the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Agreement in the form in which it was finally signed. The negotiations for months proceeded with the expressed intention that what was to be conceded to Russia was the exclusive right of railway construction in Manchuria, we having conceded to us a similar right in the Yangtsze basin. But, as far as Russia is concerned, being at the back of the Pekin and Hankow Railway, as she undoubtedly is, through the medium of the Russo-Chinese Bank—which Lord Salisbury has told us is a Russian State bank—she had invaded our sphere, and made it impossible that we could enjoy exclusive rights in the Yangtsze basin before the agreement itself was signed; whilst on our part, without a word of explanation, not only did we concede to Russia exclusive rights in Manchuria, but north of the Great Wall of China, which will in the long run be found also to embrace a large slice of the province of Chi-li, the whole of the great horse-breeding country of Mongolia, and the province of Sin Kiang.

I have had a large map prepared, which I should have liked to see hung in this House in order that my remarks on this subject might be made more intelligible. That map shows exactly what it is that Russia obtains under this Anglo-Russian Agreement, and gives other information which may be interesting to Members. If desired, I propose to place this map in the Tea Room for a short time. The fact is that, so far as the Blue-books disclose it,

Russia has the whole of these enormous territories in North China and stretching westward across Asia to territories previously in the possession of Russia, and giving to her just what she requires to enable her to take possession not only of North China, but also of Central China. Without a map it is, perhaps, difficult to make clear to the House the exact position of affairs, but hon. Members may be able to follow me if I say that, stopping for the time being the construction of the Russian Siberian railway to Vladivostock, she has already commenced the laying of a line branching off from her Siberian railway right down through Mongolia direct to Pekin. A further concession in connection with the Pekin-Hankow Railway has been got for a branch from Kai-feng-fu to Honan-fu, with the option of extending to Singan-fu, a place only two hundred miles north of the Yangtsze River, and from which the immemorial trade route into Central Asia runs. But this is only part of the Russian programme for the conquest of Asia by railways. There is another Russian main line rapidly advancing through Central Asia which seems to have escaped public notice. I mean the Russian Trans-Caspian Railway, which, proceeding north-east from Merv, is already constructed to Andijan, on the borders of the Chinese province of Sin Kiang, which has recently been accorded by us to Russia, and is, as a matter fact, under Russian domination. From the point to which this Russian Trans-Caspian line has already been constructed there is a perfectly

practicable route turning the flank of the mountainous country of Thibet for a railway down through Sin Kiang to Singan-fu. Hon. Members will see that with the completion of this line Russia not only has her Siberian railway tapping North China, but she will have her Trans-Caspian line penetrating into the very heart of Central China and dominating the Yangtsze Valley.

The Government do not appear to have even sought from Russia the recognition of similar preferential rights in our favour in Thibet, the only territory now left between India and the Russian sphere. While a comparatively poor country like Russia is not hesitating to spend over 100,000,000*l.* sterling on these projects, which will enable her finally to reap a rich harvest as regards both her commercial and political interests, what, I ask, is England doing? The British Government, so far, appear to have lost those qualities of enterprise, courage, and foresight which characterised our forefathers, and by virtue of which our world-wide British Empire has been built up. Not only have they refused, as a matter of high imperial policy, to give any encouragement or guarantee to a railway from British Burma to the upper Yangtsze as a counterpoise to the Russian railways, but they have actually stopped the construction of the railway to Kunlon Ferry, in British Burma; and this at a time when France is vigorously pushing on with the construction of her railway from Tonkin through Yunnan to Szechuan, by which she will draw the

trade of South-west China through French territories with the aid of protective tariffs, instead of our being able to carry on a free and unrestricted trade through British Burma.

British capitalists at Tientsin were perfectly prepared to construct a railway from Tientsin to Kalgan, which is the trade route into Mongolia, but were informed by the Foreign Office that they could not support such an application, as Kalgan was in the sphere conceded to Russia under the Anglo-Russian Agreement, though it is far away from Manchuria. This line of railway, being an extension of the Tientsin-Pekin line to Kalgan, would have been the most powerful barrier against Russian advance southwards.

An important factor in considering the course of events in North China, and an important and powerful influence in the direction of keeping it open to trade, is the fact that the interests of Japan are identical with our own, and that Japan is prepared to uphold her rights resolutely when assailed by Russia. Japan having a population increasing at the rate of half a million a year, and her cultivable area being comparatively small, it is absolutely essential that she should have room for expansion. The natural expansion of Japan, whether as regards climate, fertility of soil, fisheries, or mineral wealth, is into Korea. From my interviews with Japanese statesmen, I gathered that, even at the risk of war, they would prevent any Russian interference with what they consider their priority of right in Korea. More-

over, the active co-operation of Japan could be counted on in any effort to uphold throughout China the treaty rights of all nations.

With regard to Kiao-chau, the Germans know their own minds, and I saw not fewer than 5,000 Chinamen at work constructing the harbour works and building the railway into the interior of Shan-tung, whilst palatial buildings were springing up on all sides. The contrast between the activity of the Russians at Port Arthur and of the Germans at Kiau-chau and our do-nothing policy at Wei-hai-Wei, after having somewhat ostentatiously announced to the world that we had taken that place as a counterpoise to Port Arthur, is most humiliating. At Wei-hai-Wei not a single fort has been constructed, not one gun mounted; practically no buildings have been erected, and even the pier, with 30 feet of water at the end, which had been damaged by the blowing-up of a Chinese man-of-war, has not yet been repaired, though the uprights were ready to receive the superstructure. Beyond a little dredging, the construction of water-condensing apparatus, and the drilling of a few Chinese soldiers, nothing seems to have been done. When I went to the top of the island at Wei-hai-Wei I wished the First Lord of the Treasury had been there with me; for when I condemned the right hon. gentleman's action in having, unasked by Germany, precluded us from connecting Wei-hai-Wei with the interior of Shan-tung by railway, he interposed the remark that it was physically impossible. I could look

across the country towards Chefoo without being able to see a hill a hundred feet high. And when, again, from the top of the pinnacle at Chefoo, I looked towards Wei-hai-Wei, the experience was the same. The fact is that few railways in the world would be so easy of construction as one from Wei-hai-Wei to Chefoo, and in at least two other directions leading from the territory appertaining to Wei-hai-Wei through rich valleys into the interior of Shan-tung, the same is true. Wei-hai-Wei might have been made a great success as a commercial port had we not thus tied our hands. The roadstead at Chefoo is most exposed, and for days together in the winter ships can neither load nor discharge. With proper facilities a large portion of the trade done through Chefoo would have been transferred to Wei-hai-Wei. As, however, the situation is to-day, Russia having succeeded in converting the question in North China from a sea to a land question, it is very doubtful whether money ought to be spent on Wei-hai-Wei. In all probability the best course would be to hand Wei-hai-Wei over to Germany, if she, in return, would support our taking another naval base at or near the mouth of the Yang-tsze River.

The Government announced in this House that concessions had been got for British subjects for 2,800 miles of railways in China. But terms and conditions enabling the carrying-out of the projects have not yet been arranged in connection with a single concession. The Shanghai to Nankin and

several other concessions were given as reparation for the breach of faith on the part of the Chinese Government in giving the Pekin-Hankow Concession to foreign Powers over our heads. Therefore in regard to these our Government should stand no nonsense as to the terms and conditions upon which they should be built. Under the treaty of Tientsin we are entitled to equally favourable terms and conditions to those granted by the Chinese Government to Russia, France, and Germany; but we find that the Chinese Government are insisting upon a mixed Chinese and European control, which has proved, in the case of the Newchwang Extension Railway, to be surrounded by difficulties. Our Government should insist on the British concessionnaires having complete control of the security, that is, to pay interest and repay principal, with a guarantee of non-interference and the maintenance of our rights, giving only the Chinese Government an option of taking over the railways on certain terms and conditions. The Russians, Germans, and French will enjoy this control; why not the British? The confidence of the British investor was disturbed by the way in which the Government allowed Russia to dictate the terms and conditions upon which the Newchwang Extension Loan should be concluded, and by the unsatisfactory way in which the mixed control has since operated; for though they offered 12,000,000*l.* sterling against 2,300,000*l.* required when that loan was floated, it is questionable whether the money would now be forthcoming for

even the cream of the railway concessions unless obtained on the terms and conditions I have mentioned. With regard to the terms and conditions upon which the concessions for these—what we may term—reparation railways, I find that on September 4, 1898, Sir Claude MacDonald stated in a despatch that the terms accorded for the construction of these lines will not be inferior to the terms granted for the construction of any railways in China proper, and that they had agreed to send him a confidential Note to that effect. This would have secured terms and conditions equal to those granted to Germany for the railways she is constructing in Shan-tung; but, within a few days, under instructions from the First Lord of the Treasury, Sir Claude MacDonald accepted these concessions on not less favourable conditions than those granted to the concessionnaires for the Pekin and Hankow Railway. Those terms and conditions are workable when in the hands of concessionnaires having at their back the Governments of Russia and France, but are useless to British concessionnaires so long as they do not receive the proper support from the British Government.

An American syndicate entered into a preliminary contract with the Chinese Government for the building of a railway from Hankow to Canton, and also made a provisional agreement with an English syndicate, with the object of having this railway constructed by an Anglo-American company. The Chinese Government, however, have thrown

every obstacle in the way of the ratification of this concession on terms and conditions not less favourable to those granted to other Powers, whilst the French Government have actively intervened to prevent the carrying through of the concession, and claimed that unless the American syndicate is prepared to construct the line on the terms and conditions of the Pekin and Hankow Concession the right to construct the railway falls into their hands. The question of by whom this important railway is to be constructed is one vitally affecting the future of the Chinese Empire ; for, if the concessionnaires of the Pekin and Hankow Railway are allowed to secure this concession, it will give to Russia and France a railway system through the heart of the Chinese Empire from the extreme north to the extreme south, and will place them practically in military occupation of it. I hope, therefore, to hear from the Under-Secretary that Her Majesty's Government are vigorously supporting the United States Government in insisting that this railway, penetrating as it does from the south right into the heart of our supposed sphere of interest, the Yangtsze basin, shall not be given to any other foreign Powers.

To show how Her Majesty's Government fails to sustain British rights in China, I may instance the Pekin Syndicate. This corporation was promised a concession for a railway to connect its mineral properties in Shansi with the navigable limits of the Yangtsze River. But, whilst the

application for such communication has been flatly refused to the British company, there has been secured by the concessionaires of the Pekin-Hankow Railway the right to construct a railway from Kai-feng-fu to Honan-fu, with the option of extending it to Singan-fu, thus barring the road for the construction of the railway promised to the Pekin Syndicate.

Another achievement of Her Majesty's Government was the Yangtsze Valley Agreement, which, even now, many people in this country imagine secures to us the Yangtsze Basin as a special sphere of influence in which we have priority of rights. This, however, is an absolute myth. Russia, France, Germany, and Japan are all to-day more actively engaged in advancing their commercial and political interests in the rich Yangtsze Basin than we are ours. They have sovereign rights over various areas at Shanghai, Hankow, and elsewhere, whilst we have none.

A further surrender on the part of Her Majesty's Government is in regard to the extension of the French settlement at Shanghai. A firm stand was originally taken against this demand by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and backed up as it was at the time by the United States of America, it was understood that the demand would not be granted. How little needed such a concession was will be made very clear when I state that in the French concession already in existence there are only seventeen Frenchmen resident; and yet, notwithstanding this, our diplomatists have again given

way. France has got the extension of her concession, and British prestige has once more been lowered in the eyes of the Chinese Government.

In one debate in this House we heard with great satisfaction that Her Majesty's Government had at length determined to do something to uphold British commercial interests by the placing of gunboats on the inland waterways of China for the protection of British trade. Two gunboats were sent out to patrol the upper Yangtsze more than twelve months ago; but, though their crews have been paid by the British taxpayer and they have been on the spot all this time, they have yet to make the first ascent of that portion of the river which they were intended to patrol; and the Under-Secretary informed us the other day that they were going to attempt this next month. The fact is, that these two boats, the 'Woodcock' and the 'Woodlark,' are unsuitable for the purpose, both as regards construction and steaming power. As they have to go up rapids sometimes running thirteen and fourteen knots an hour and steam only eleven knots, it is obvious they can only mount the rapids with assistance from shore, and they would be useless, therefore, if a hostile attitude were assumed by the inhabitants of the district. The whirlpools and cross-currents of the river are in places so strong that the gunboats ought to have paddle-wheels instead of screws, and it is ridiculous to send out boats constructed of plates under one-eighth of an inch thick instead of being at least three-sixteenths for a river of

the character of the upper Yangtsze. Apparently without any inquiry whatever, when gunboats were needed for the upper Yangtsze, the Admiralty decided to send out two Nile gunboats. This is a serious matter, so far as the commercial interests of this country are concerned, because a British cargo-steamer is expected to be plying on the upper Yangtsze within the next month or two; and in all probability the half-million Chinamen now carrying on the trade on the river will regard this innovation as a menace to their livelihood, and trouble will arise. It is imperative that gunboats capable of going wherever they may be required, without shore assistance and without regard to the state of the river, should be placed on the upper Yangtsze immediately. The 'Woodcock' and 'Woodlark,' now there, should be transferred to the West River, as on that river the old 'Tweed' can steam only two knots against the current, and the 'Sandpiper' four knots, which, all will agree, renders them quite unable to cope effectually with the pirates who infest that district. The pirates on the West River have more than once seized British-owned steamers, ransacked them, and then used them for capturing richly laden native junks. But up to the present time no punishment whatever has been inflicted on the perpetrators of these outrages. It is true we are told that the Admiral is now considering the question of how best to repress the piracy. But why now? Why not twelve months ago? Why were the gunboats in the district prevented for so long a time

from taking any effective measures for the repression of the piracy which has been so rife?

Then, with regard to the opening up of all the inland waterways of China, the agreement with the Chinese Government was announced in this House as one which would make it possible to take British merchandise in British ships, not merely to the ports recognised by treaty, but to every riverside town and station in the whole interior of China. On the strength of this agreement leading British shipping firms in China expended 60,000*l.* in building steamers to trade from Hong Kong and Canton up the West River. So far, however, from these steamers being allowed to take British goods to every riverside town and station, they have not been permitted to load or discharge cargo at intervening places between the treaty ports. They have consequently been working at a considerable loss, and several have been taken off altogether. The right hon. gentleman the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in answer to a question I put to him the other day* on this subject, said this was not within the knowledge of the Foreign Office. In view, however, of the lengthy correspondence between the shipping firms in China and the British Legation in Pekin on this question, it seems extraordinary that the Foreign Office should not have received this important information. In reply to a further question, the right hon. gentleman said the

* See the *Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], vol. lxxx. p. 1180.

agreement with the Chinese Government permitted foreigners to trade in steamers where native boats had been permitted, but this did not include every riverside town and station. I must, however, refer the right hon. gentleman to the express declaration made in this House by his predecessor, Mr. Curzon, to which I have already alluded. I am informed by those engaged in trading on the Chinese inland waterways that native boats are permitted to trade with every riverside town and station, and also escape with lower duties. This being so, it is obviously impossible for British steamers to compete when they are required to have one steamer to trade between treaty ports and a second with the other riverside towns and stations, both boats running probably half empty; whereas, if, according to the agreement, they were allowed to load and discharge cargo at every riverside town and station, whether treaty ports or not, one steamer would do where two are now employed, and a profitable trade would be carried on. I have repeatedly pressed the Government to insist upon the carrying out in its entirety of this agreement with the Chinese Government, and I should be glad to learn from the right hon. gentleman to-night that the Government are determined to insist on this.

With regard to South China and Western China, in the course of my journey I penetrated through the Yangtsze gorges 1,600 miles up the Yangtsze River. I travelled some distance into the rich province of Szechuan, with its fifty millions of

industrious and prosperous inhabitants. I found this province is covered by French Jesuit priests, who, in addition to the work of a religious propaganda, gather and transmit to the French Government information as to the mineral wealth and the commercial possibilities of the country. They have practically completed a geological survey of the province, and now the French are pressing for exclusive rights to work minerals in six districts which they believe to be rich in mineral wealth. They have also prepared a chart of the Yangtsze River, which was to me of invaluable service. As in South Africa it has been found that we actually had no knowledge of the country around Ladysmith, though it had been our military headquarters for years, so in China our charts are out of date, and therefore useless. An Admiralty chart of the Yangtsze was prepared in 1861, and some slight corrections have been made since, but it is at the present time no guide to the navigation of a river of the changing character of the Yangtsze.

I have again and again drawn the attention of the Government to the agreement of January, 1896, between the British Government and the French Government, under which each nation bound itself to use its best offices with the Chinese Government to secure for the other similar and increased opportunities and facilities for trading with Yunnan and Szechuan. This agreement has been entirely disregarded by the French Government without calling forth any remonstrance from Her

Majesty's Government. Nanning-fu, the treaty port on the West River, which was declared to be open more than a year ago (as was admitted the other night by the right hon. gentleman) still remains unopened. And remembering the violent opposition on the part of the French to the opening of Nanning-fu, one cannot but feel that in all probability the delay in the opening is due to French influence. I hope to hear from the right hon. gentleman that Her Majesty's Government will not allow further delay, as we have a right to expect that the state of affairs under which British goods have to be transhipped from Hong Kong, sent through Tonkin up to South-west China, and are subjected to a differential duty of 10 per cent. when passing through French territory, shall be ended without delay.

The French are busily engaged in constructing a railway from Tonkin towards Yunnan, with the intention of ultimately carrying it forward into Szechuan, and of drawing the trade of South-west China down to the sea through French Indo-China, and with the declared expectation that sooner or later France will be able to annex Szechuan, Yunnan, Kwang-si, and Kwang-tung—the four great Chinese provinces to the north of her Indo-China possessions. When we have regard to the fact that seven-eighths of the imports into French Indo-China in 1885 went from England, Germany, and Switzerland, and that to-day, owing to differential duties in favour of French goods, amounting

in some cases to 50 per cent., three-fourths of the imports go from France, and only one-fourth from the rest of the world, we have an object-lesson of the vital importance of resolutely upholding our just commercial rights in South and South-west China, if in the future we are not to see British trade strangled by differential tariffs in those regions also.

Her Majesty's Government took great credit for the Kau-lung extension opposite Hong Kong. But I find that the value of the extension was very much reduced by the obstinacy with which the home authorities, contrary to the strongly expressed opinion of both civil and military authorities out there, accepted the present boundary, which forms no natural defence. The river is easily fordable in many places; it is considerably south of the head of Mirs Bay, included in the concession, and besides contains no healthy camping ground. They ought to have insisted that the boundary should be a natural line of mountains running slightly north of the head of Mirs Bay, which would have given a healthy camping ground and a strong natural frontier. It will be in the recollection of the House that, owing to the opposition to the British when taking possession, we occupied Sam Chun, outside the boundary, where we had a most healthy camp. However, while I was at Hong Kong, instructions came from home that, under arrangements made with the Chinese Government, Sam Chun was to be evacuated. This, it

was believed, had been done because the French had pointed out to the Chinese Government that we had been allowed to occupy a territory beyond the concession agreed upon, and that they were in consequence claiming further concessions around their newly acquired treaty port in the south. If this was so, the result at any rate was not creditable to British diplomacy, for within a week of our evacuation of Sam Chun the French demands were conceded in full by the Chinese Government.

Again and again in this House declarations of policy have been made by Her Majesty's Government which, if carried out, would have given the greatest satisfaction to everybody interested in the upholding and the extending of our commercial interests in the Far East. But, unfortunately, whether in regard to agreements such as the Anglo-Russian Agreement, in the matter of railway concessions, the opening of the inland waterways, the patrolling by gunboats of the Yangtsze and the West Rivers, or the terms and conditions upon which the acquisition of Wei-hai-Wei and Kau-lung have been secured, all alike have proved delusive and unsatisfactory. And I do not hesitate to say that in China our prestige and influence, which were predominant five years ago, are non-existent to-day.

The Blue-book issued yesterday is unfortunately largely a further record of failure on the part of Her Majesty's Government to deal successfully with the Tsung-li-Yamen. This voluminous paper hardly contains one instance where a distinct diplomatic

success has been achieved. What, then, ought Her Majesty's Government to do, in view of accomplished facts in the Far East, in order to retrieve as far as possible the disastrous results of their neglect to pursue a firm and definite policy? The understanding arrived at between the United States Government and the other nations interested in the trade of China, securing, if faithfully observed, the maintenance of the open door, appears to afford another golden opportunity for seeking the further friendly co-operation of the Great Powers in the promotion of administrative reforms, so greatly needed for the strengthening of the Imperial Government and for maintaining the integrity of China, the necessity for which the United States Government so fully recognise.

All authorities in China agree that a serious mistake was made in allowing the deposition of the Emperor last year, and the assumption of the control of China by the reactionary Dowager Empress, who is a usurper and has no title whatever to occupy her present position. In view of the somewhat alarming news as to the disturbed condition and anti-foreign feeling in various parts of China, joint action ought, in my opinion, to be taken by the Powers, to replace the Emperor on the throne; for it is undoubted that his sympathies are genuinely in favour of reform and the opening up of his country to trade. But, in addition to this, I would draw the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the fact that the Chinese Government

would be powerless to resist the aggression, territorially and otherwise, of other Powers unless she is enabled to have her naval and military forces reorganised. This she cannot do unless her revenues are considerably increased. I would therefore strongly urge that the time has come for a revision of the customs tariff in China, and that at present the maritime customs import duty of 5 per cent., which is a maximum of 5 per cent., and in many cases really much less, should be substantially increased, on the condition that not only every riverside town and station, but also the interior of China, is freely thrown open to foreign trade, and that some satisfactory rearrangement to secure the equitable levying of *likin* would be included in the agreement. The proportion should be fixed that is to be paid into the provincial and imperial treasuries respectively. Some system of paying officials, so as to render it possible for them to live without corruptly applying any portion of the revenues which pass through their hands, is essential. It would appear desirable that the increased revenues thus obtained by China should be allocated to specific purposes, and should be given only on condition that an agreed amount be expended on the reorganisation of the military and naval forces of China, under officers to be jointly provided by those Powers who do not desire the partition of the country; that a further sum be applied to river conservancy, with a view of improving the navigation of such great commercial arteries of the Chinese Empire as the

Yangtsze and West Rivers, under the control of international conservancy boards; and that there be a previous ratification, on satisfactory terms and conditions, of railway concessions promised to British concessionnaires.

If joint action were taken by the United States of America, England, Japan, and Germany in support of the policy I have indicated, it would be difficult for Russia and France to hold aloof. I have always recognised the vast importance to British trade of the development of our Indian Empire. But the great Empire of China, with its four hundred millions of industrious trading people, its greater fertility of soil, and its enormous mineral resources, is in my opinion of still greater importance to the British nation, considered from a commercial point of view. I therefore earnestly hope that the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs may be able to assure the House to-night that this policy of preserving China for the Chinese, and developing her resources in the interests alike of the population of that country and of all nations, will receive the vigorous and determined support of Her Majesty's Government; for in this way, and in this way alone, can the just influence and commercial rights of the British nation be preserved in the Far East.

CHAPTER XV

THE PRESENT CRISIS

SINCE I reviewed the situation in China on March 30 last, very grave events have occurred with startling rapidity. I then said that the neglect of the British Government to take vigorous measures at the time of the *coup d'état* in 1898 to prevent the setting aside of the Emperor was a most serious mistake and would have far-reaching consequences. I pointed out that the reactionary Dowager Empress is a usurper and has no title whatever to exercise the functions of government. I drew attention to the disturbed condition and anti-foreign feeling in various parts of China and urged that joint action ought to be taken by the Powers to replace the Emperor on the throne, as his sympathies were undoubtedly in favour of reform.

This statement and the policy indicated were ridiculed by the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Few, however, realised at that time how imperative it was that not a day should be lost in carrying out what I advocated, viz.: the compulsory retirement of the Empress Dowager and the restoration

of the young Emperor to practical power by concerted action on the part of England and all the other Powers who could have been induced to join her.

The Hong Kong China Association early in last year sent a communication to the Foreign Office strongly representing that trouble was brewing in China, and that an anti-foreign outbreak was almost certain to take place.

They expressed their strong conviction that it was of the highest importance that adequate naval and military forces should be concentrated at Wei-hai-Wei or Hong Kong in order that they might be promptly available for the protection of the lives and property of British subjects in any part of China. Both the Foreign Office and Sir Claude Macdonald unfortunately disregarded this warning, and we were therefore unable, when the uprising occurred, to place a sufficient force on the ground without delay.

It is clear that a lamentable and fatal ignorance as to what was transpiring in China prevailed both at the Foreign Office and at the British Legation in Pekin. We have been indebted to the 'Times' correspondent much more than to the British Legation for information about what has occurred from day to day in Pekin for some years past.

With regard to the present anti-foreign outbreak, however, not only the British Legation but even Sir Robert Hart appears to have been in ignorance of the fact that it was impending. It is only fair also to remember that the representatives of other

Powers at Pekin have been equally taken by surprise.

No doubt many causes have led to the uprising of the Chinese against the foreigners. Foremost among them I place the absence of any firm and definite policy on the part of England and the consequent arbitrary and aggressive action of Russia and Germany in extorting concessions enabling them to enter into military occupation of Chinese territory.

This unjust interference undoubtedly strengthened the hands of the reactionary and anti-foreign Empress Dowager and her following, and made the 1898 *coup d'état* possible. Under the influence of her reactionary ministers the establishment of Boxers' societies was encouraged.

The moderate men were one by one got rid of, and finally came the outburst which a refusal on the part of the Powers to allow the supersession of the Emperor in 1898 would have prevented. From the time of the Chino-Japanese war the British Government should have shown a resolute determination to preserve China for the Chinese and to keep that Empire equally open to the trade of all nations, in accordance with the treaties of Nankin and Tientsin. In this policy we could have relied upon the co-operation of Japan and the United States of America.

All the Chinese statesmen I interviewed spoke bitterly of their great disappointment that England, whom they had always regarded as their best friend,

had not stood by them and enabled them to resist aggressions.

It seems clear now that the Chinese, though apparently yielding to every demand made upon them which was backed by force, were at the same time quietly but vigorously engaged in preparing for a single-handed effort to expel the intruders.

How ignorant all nations were of the extent to which the Chinese army has lately been equipped with the best modern artillery and rifles and trained in their use is shown by the unhesitating and confident manner in which a mixed international force of under 2,000 men set out and made a gallant attempt to relieve Pekin.

With regard to the present situation the first duty of the Powers is to restore law and order where anarchy and bloodshed now reign, and then to set up a more enlightened and stable government in China. The great viceroys, Liu Kun Yi, Chang Chih Tung, and others who are believed to be doing their utmost to protect foreigners and to maintain order throughout the vast territories they govern, will earn the gratitude of the civilised world and promote the interests of their own country by continuing in that course. These viceroys, if in favour of reform, as I believe, should be included in the Government which must be formed under the protection of the Powers. To encourage them and to strengthen their hands, it should be distinctly intimated to the viceroys that not only can they rely on receiving any assistance that may be necessary now, but that we will

guarantee them the fullest protection hereafter should any attempt be made to inflict punishment upon them in consequence of their friendly action. The Chinese people could then, without fear of consequences, show their real views, and I am confident it would be found that the reformers are a not inconsiderable body. The greatest difficulty may be a divergence of opinion among the Powers as to what ought to be done at the conclusion of hostilities; but the recent declaration of policy on the part of Germany in Count von Bülow's Circular leaves nothing to be desired, and if England, Japan, and the United States of America give it their united support, Russia and France are bound to fall into line. Germany's policy is defined in that Circular to be 'the restoration of security for the person, the property, and the work of subjects of the German Empire in China, the rescue of the foreigners besieged in Pekin, the re-establishment and the safeguarding of law and order under a proper Chinese Government, and retribution and satisfaction for the barbarities which have been perpetrated. We desire no partition of China; we have no separate advantages for ourselves in view. The Imperial Government feels convinced that the maintenance of the understanding among the Powers is the preliminary condition of the restoration of peace and order in China.'

The Government of the United States of America obtained certain assurances from the Powers in regard to the maintenance throughout China of the

open door equally for the trade of all nations, and at that time urged the necessity for the introduction of administrative reforms into the government of the country.

It is more than unfortunate that the exigencies of a presidential election should apparently paralyse their action at this important crisis, but it is to be hoped that when the election is over we may have their vigorous co-operation in support of the just policy they so ably and successfully promoted and advocated.

Having regard to the fact, as stated in the House of Commons the other day, that out of a total Chinese foreign trade of seventy millions sterling last year the share of the British Empire was forty-three millions, and that this is capable of indefinite expansion, it is clear that our commercial interests are vitally bound up in the maintenance of 'the open door.'

It has been assumed that Great Britain has effectively claimed priority of right in the Yangtsze basin as her sphere. This assumption is not justified, because Japan, Germany, the United States of America, Russia, and France are as actively engaged in promoting their commercial interests in the Yangtsze valley as we are, and some of them have even acquired quasi-sovereign possession of portions of territory therein. We have, therefore, no priority.

Put shortly, then, the policy of the British Government should be—to strenuously seek, in concert with other nations, to secure the removal of those now in

power in Pekin, and to set up in China a stable and enlightened Government under the protection of the Powers, so that China may be preserved for the Chinese and remain open equally to the trade of all nations. This policy is identical with that of Count von Bülow.

It is of vital importance to the future prosperity of the British Empire that the Chinese problem should be solved on just and equitable lines. The various concessions, whether in regard to railways or the opening up of the inland waterways, so that British ships could take British goods to any riverside town or station, remain a dead letter.

When a settlement is arrived at it is essential that it should include the rearrangement of the commercial treaties, so that the Chinese Government shall receive substantially increased import duties, on the following conditions:

Firstly, that all likin is abolished, and that in lieu of it the provincial governments shall receive a certain proportion of the increased revenues.

Secondly, that the officials are adequately paid, so that it may no longer be excusable to appropriate money passing through their hands.

Thirdly, that the inland waterways and the interior of China shall be opened freely and equally to the trade of all nations, and that a sum shall be allocated out of the imperial revenues to be expended under International Conservancy Boards in removing obstructions to navigation on the Yangtsze, West,

Yellow, and other rivers, which are or will be the great commercial arteries of the Chinese Empire.

Fourthly, that the Chinese Government shall be given the right to take over, on specified terms and conditions, all railways built with foreign capital—the undertakings being mortgaged to and remaining under the control of the companies providing the capital until principal and interest have been repaid.

To place Great Britain in a position to exercise the powerful influence which her vast commercial interests demand in connection with the settlement I have ventured to suggest, and to prevent her being overshadowed by any other Power in the arrangements required for the constitution of a new Chinese Government, she must now take a full share in the task of restoring order. The situation appears to demand an augmentation of our naval and military forces, especially the latter, beyond the reinforcements already announced; and I can only express the hope that more foresight will be shown by Her Majesty's Government in preparing for all possible contingencies than was the case in regard to South Africa.

CHAPTER XVI

NOTES ON A VISIT TO JAPAN AND KOREA

An American writer has said of Japan: 'It is unquestionably the unique nation of the globe—the land of dream and enchantment, the land which could hardly differ more from our own were it located on another planet, its people not of this world,' and this I largely endorse.

Now, think of a nation homogeneous to a degree, living under a single dynasty dating back 2,500 years, and during all those years having the sentiment of loyalty taught and cherished till it became a passion and an object of worship; think of the national pride engendered by the fact that not once in all those many centuries has the foot of an invader been suffered to press the soil.

'THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH'

The following paragraph admirably summarises the marvellous change which has taken place in Japan almost in a single generation: 'Japan, secluded for over two centuries from contact with the outer world, was burst open by the American expedition in 1853–4 under the command of

Commodore Perry. Making a virtue of necessity, her rulers soon determined to Europeanise the country, as the best means of preserving its independence. Ships were bought, foreign naval and military instructors engaged, feudalism replaced by a centralised autocracy, education reorganised on the pattern presented by Western nations, posts, telegraphs, and railways introduced, European dress, European manners, European amusements adopted, Buddhism disestablished, Christianity—if not encouraged—tolerated by the constitution. In short, in every sphere of activity, the old order gave place to the new. The change has been specially marked since the successful war with China in 1894–5, the prestige then acquired having given an extraordinary impetus to trade and industry on European lines. But even Japan, great as is the power of imitation and assimilation possessed by her people, has not been able completely to transform her whole material, mental, and social being within the limits of a single lifetime. Fortunately for the curious observer, she continues in a state of transition, less Japanese and more European day by day, it is true, but still retaining characteristics of her own, especially in the dress, manners, and beliefs of the lower classes. Those who wish to see as much as possible of the old order of things should come quickly.'

VOLCANOES

The country is mountainous and has comparatively little flat land. The mountains of Japan are,

for the most part, volcanic. Many of them are still active, and number 170. Earthquakes are frequent. Minor shocks average from thirty or forty to several hundreds annually—I have experienced several—and of severe shocks history shows that there have been some two or three in each century, entailing the overthrow of dwellings and great destruction of human and animal life.

VEGETABLE PRODUCTS

Rich soil, a genial climate, and a sufficient rainfall produce luxuriant vegetation; cultivated fields and gardens succeed each other through wide areas. Moreover, the main island possesses very great varieties of vegetation. In Nankaido (Southern Sea highway region) are thick verdant forests, abounding in giant trees. Sugar-cane, tobacco, and cotton find a soil congenial to their growth; the cocoa, the banyan tree, and the banana flourish in the Riukiu and Ogasawara Islands. In short, the general aspect is tropical. Passing thence to the Central districts, great varieties of vegetation are found. The pine, the oak, the camphor tree, and the bamboo grow in the woods; while the mulberry, the tea-plant, the lacquer-tree, millet, the five cereals, and various kinds of fruits and vegetables are seen in the fields and gardens. Finally, even in Hokkaido, though the cold is great, the soil is fertile and the vegetation luxuriant.

FISH AND BIRDS

All along the coast fish and crustaceans are found in such abundance that they more than suffice for the ordinary food of the inhabitants. Of birds there is a great variety, some possessing beautiful plumage, others melodious notes, and others being suitable for food. In the last-mentioned class are fowls and ducks. The silkworm is largely reared throughout the main island, the climate and soil being particularly suitable for the purpose.

NATIVE OCCUPATIONS

The people of the main island live chiefly upon rice, vegetables, and fish. The great majority of those in the interior engage in agriculture, while those on the coasts devote their time to fishing.

PROTECTIVE WORKS

As we approached Yokohama I had pointed out to me the entrance to the Naval Arsenal, which is said to be impregnable. There are also strongly fortified positions on the hills, and forts erected at intervals across the bay. We landed in steam-launches.

NOVEL CARRIAGES

Carriages drawn by horses are somewhat rare in Japan. A light two-wheeled carriage known as a 'jinricksha,' and drawn by men, is the usual means of locomotion. I greatly envied the magnificent muscular development of the legs of the 'jinricksha-men.'

CUSTOM-HOUSE EXPERIENCE

I had a somewhat novel experience at the Custom House, where, in my absence, three of my boxes were forcibly opened and a box of new neck-ties taken out. The officials demanded a larger amount for duty than the actual cost in England. This I refused on principle to pay, as, in the first place, the proper duty under the new treaty is only 15 per cent. on silk goods, and also because they were articles of wearing apparel, just the same as my collars and shirts, and therefore not liable to duty. After a certain amount of correspondence the neck-ties were returned, and it was admitted that a mistake had been made in taking the package from my trunk and in holding it for duty.

RAILWAYS

Thirty years ago there was not a railway in Japan. Now there are over 3,000 miles of railways, which for the most part pay well. Poor though Japan is, comparatively speaking, the Japanese so appreciate the fact that railways are the most powerful factor in advancing the prosperity and development of a country, that, notwithstanding their heavy burden for armaments, they are going to spend twelve millions sterling between this year and 1905 in the laying down of railways. Travelling is slow, but fairly comfortable. One thousand miles of railway belong to the State; and there is a strong movement in favour of the

nationalisation of railways, which I hope will be successful. Railway fares run about one penny a mile first class and a farthing per mile third.

At the stations you hear the musical calls of men offering for sale newspapers and refreshments; substantial Japanese luncheons of fish, rice, and pickles can be had for twopence halfpenny each. Sake, beer, and biscuits are also sold.

SIMILARITY IN POSITION OF JAPAN AND ENGLAND

The Japanese consider that, inhabiting as they do a group of islands somewhat similar to the British Isles, they are in many respects in the same position as England. Many, therefore, attach more importance to having a strong navy than a strong army, though, having adopted largely the German forms of military organisation, conscription is in force, and every Japanese when he attains the age of twenty must serve two years in the army. They have begun to realise that with a population increasing at the rate of 400,000 a year it is essential, since their cultivable land is limited in area, that they, like England, should establish more industries and become a manufacturing nation. Lacking as they do natural resources in the shape of iron ore, and having only a limited quantity of coal and lumber, they are unlikely to be serious competitors with England or America so far as the iron and steel trades are concerned.

EDUCATION

It is becoming a rare thing to find a man or a woman unable to read or write, although the labour involved in this acquirement is infinitely greater than that imposed upon the learner in any Western land. The Japanese are making good progress educationally. They have more than three millions of children in their elementary day-schools, and the education of every child over six years of age is compulsory. They have adopted the German system as their model, and are building splendid schools for secondary education, in regard to which, if well staffed and administered, they will certainly soon be ahead of England unless we bestir ourselves.

NEWSPAPERS

To read the better class of newspapers, which employ a range of four or five thousand characters as compared with the twenty-six letters of the English alphabet, is a great achievement; but in a newspaper printing establishment the multitudinous and enormous cases of type necessary to hold the thousands of characters required for the columns of a Japanese 'daily' would strike terror into the hearts of the Western newspaper men. The compositors themselves sit at their cases, each containing the forty-seven Kana before him, but every one of them has half-a-dozen agile boys to assist in the hunting among the numerous divisions of the mountain of type containing the Japanese ideographs. In and out among the cases, piled like

book stacks in a great library, these boys, who must needs be something of scholars themselves, jostle against one another in their eagerness, all the time keeping up their weird chant to refresh their memories. Not one of the objects of their search escapes them, and in a few minutes the compositor has the required types before him, selected from the four to five thousand characters employed.

TAXATION OF LAND

It was interesting to me to find that the taxation of land is perhaps the most burning political question in Japan. Contrary to what one would expect, the Progressionists oppose any increase in the land tax. I ought to explain that this land tax, which was formerly paid to the old feudal nobles, now goes to the Emperor. The amount of the tax is about $3\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. on old assessments made about a quarter of a century ago, and much below its present value. Some politicians gain popularity by opposing an increase in the land tax in the rural districts, and others by opposing any increase in the land tax and other direct taxation in the urban districts. The question of the incidence of taxation is a matter demanding the attention of politicians of all schools in Japan as urgently as it does in England, for there is much need of reform in both countries in order to secure the application of the only equitable principle on which taxation can proceed—viz. that every man shall be taxed according to his ability to pay.

GRADUATED TAXATION

The principle of graduated taxation is applied in Japan to a greater extent than in England. As regards the income tax, no one is liable to pay unless he has an income of 300 yen, when 1 per cent. is demanded, and this rises by a graduated scale up to 15 per cent., according to the amount of his income.

COMMERCIAL DISHONESTY

I regret to say that on all hands I have had the statement that Japanese traders are not specially distinguished for honesty, particularly in their business relations with foreigners. We have in this a most striking proof that the character of people is largely formed by the nature of their surroundings. For hundreds of years the trading class in Japan has occupied a very low place in the social scale. In the last thirty years, since the feudal system has been abolished, the position of traders has greatly changed, and now some of those who were nobles are engaged in trade, and I am told there is reason to hope that shortly business affairs in Japan will be conducted on more honest lines.

PORCELAIN AND CLOISONNÉ

Two of the most interesting industries in Japan are the production of porcelain and cloisonné. I went over some of the works, and the skill of the artists in painting and manipulating the goods throughout the various processes is remarkable. I observed that many of the workers had skin erup-

tions. This was more noticeable owing to the scanty clothing which they wear in this hot climate. I conclude that the Japanese still require to adopt laws securing the greatest possible protection for workmen who follow dangerous trades, as what I saw seemed to point to lead poisoning.

JAPANESE COAL

Japanese coal has recently fallen considerably, the previous high price having led to over-production. During the Chino-Japanese war Welsh coal was bought for the Japanese navy to some considerable extent, and this would be the case in the event of another war, owing to its smokeless character. The Russian, German, and English fleets out here all use Welsh coal, and I think they might with advantage mix a portion of best Yorkshire hard steam with it.

TOKYO ARSENAL

By permission of the military authorities, I was taken over the arsenal at Tokyo, where the rifles and cartridges needed for the Japanese army are manufactured by over six thousand workmen. The workshops and machinery are excellent. Most of the machinery has been supplied from England, and next to England comes America. I was surprised to find, however, that the steel bars out of which the barrel of the rifle is formed are always supplied by France. Major Murata, son of the inventor of the Murata rifle, which the Japanese used in the Chino-Japanese war, showed me round, and per-

sonally explained both the working of the Murata rifle and also of a new rifle which they adopted two years ago. It is a magazine rifle, with very simple mechanism, and is loaded with five cartridges at a time. So far as one could judge, the Japanese workmen are very handy, but I am told they turn out much less work per man than English workmen.

MOUNTAIN RESORTS

After spending several days in the moist hot atmosphere of Tokyo in the really hard work of collecting information, I went to the mountains to recruit in fresher air, and to enjoy the beauties of Nature, in which the districts of Nikko, Chuzenji, and Yumoto abound. Nikko is 2,000 feet above the sea-level, and there I inspected some of the finest temples in Japan. They are the tombs of the first and third Shoguns of the Tokugawa family, called in the treaty with England the Tycoon. The carved wood is covered with lacquer in rich harmonious colours, and the whole effect is very beautiful. These temples are embosomed in magnificent woods rising high above them, and containing some of the finest timber in Japan. Stretching twenty miles away from Nikko is a wonderful avenue of cryptomeria trees, a kind of cedar, which lines the old highway leading to that place.

From Nikko I went on to Chuzenji, where there is a fine lake surrounded by high hills clothed to their very summit with luxuriant vegetation. A further expedition brought me to Yumoto, where

scores of hot sulphur springs, of a temperature high enough to boil eggs, bubbled forth from the ground. Close by Yumoto is a gem of a lake surrounded by splendid pine forests. Yumoto is 4,700 feet above the sea, and the stream descending from this to the lake of Chuzenji is precipitated over huge, almost perpendicular slopes of rock, in large and beautiful waterfalls.

FLOWERS AND FRUIT

As every one knows, Japan at certain seasons of the year is rendered still more attractive by a profusion of flowers. It is especially noted for its magnificent show of cherry and plum blossom, and there is also the gorgeous wistaria, the lotus, the azalea ten to twenty-five feet high, and the iris. It is the natural home of the chrysanthemum, which blooms everywhere. The huge, beautiful, and strongly perfumed tiger lily grows wild, and the root of this plant is used as a vegetable.

As regards fruit, which is of poor quality, pears, peaches, plums, persimmons, oranges, apples, and several kinds of melons are chiefly grown.

Among the fowls are cocks whose tails are from four to six yards long. There are crabs fourteen inches across the body, and as much as six feet from the extremity of one claw to the other.

JAPANESE TOWN AT NIGHT

One of the things a traveller should not fail to do in Japan is to stroll in the streets of a large town at

night. I went out in Kyoto, and though they have neither gas nor electric light, the main business streets, which were thronged with the picturesquely dressed Japanese, were ablaze with light.

There were many excellent lamps; also a multitude of Japanese lanterns, which produced a very pretty effect. There are no shop windows in the English sense; the stores open right on to the street, and were well patronised. In the refreshment-houses I noticed ices being made by the somewhat novel method of scraping a large piece of ice over what was exactly like a carpenter's plane, the projecting blade cutting a thin layer off each time the ice was passed over it. To the ice thus shred was added a little sugar, as the customers were served.

Wooden erections resembling tables are built on supports fixed in the river which runs through the heart of Kyoto. On these crowds of people recline and are served with refreshments. The whole river on both sides thus fitted out for some distance and illuminated with hundreds of lanterns and lights, made a brilliant scene. All seemed to be enjoying themselves. The Japanese, I understand, are more given to holiday-making than most other races.

JAPANESE HABITS

A Japanese, on entering a house, removes his shoes instead of his hat, and if he takes up a book to read, he opens it at the back and reads from right to left instead of from left to right.

They are a merry people, and do not take life too seriously. In the middle of the afternoon in Tokyo I saw the native theatres, the zoological gardens, the parks, and the museums crowded with people. The artificial water in their parks is full of huge goldfish, and when one bought prepared food and threw it into the water the fish simply swarmed for it, and fought one over the other in an almost solid mass in order to secure a share of it, a laughing crowd of Japanese invariably looking on. They are without exception, no matter what their station in life may be, the most polite people I have ever met.

I had the novel experience of being ten days in the country without paying a single bill. The hotel-keeper would not take English money, and after entertaining me at one hotel recommended me to another, asking me to pay them when I had an opportunity of forwarding Japanese money. One inn-keeper went so far as to lend me the wherewithal for my railway fares.

In engaging a carriage there are invariably two men on the box, one of whom drives, while the other is constantly jumping on and off, running in front of the carriage before a corner is turned to clear the track, and uttering cries with the same object. The men are dressed in blue flowing robes, with a band round their waists. They have large flat round black hats of mushroom shape, and wear white gloves. The footman always opens the carriage door when you get in or out, hat in hand and bowing low.

JAPANESE WOMEN

I am told that by far the larger part of the works of the best age of Japanese literature are of feminine authorship. Women occupy a position of greater social equality with men than is the case in any other Oriental country.

The women wear what may be described as a broad sash, which they call an 'obi.' This gives a certain amount of support around their body, and forms a richly bedecked appendage on their backs. Babies are slung on the backs of those who carry them, and appear quite comfortable in that position.

Boots are practically unknown except among a few Europeanised Japanese. The women usually wear sandals made of straw, or shuffle along in what we should describe in England as wooden clogs. These are attached to their feet by a strap which is passed round the big toe. In order to receive this strap their stockings are made in the form of a mitten. In wet weather two pieces of wood are fixed under the piece upon which the foot rests almost in the form of short stilts; on these they toddle along with a somewhat uncertain gait. Unlike English ladies, it is the absorbing desire of young women in Japan to grow old, that they may share the reverence given to age.

JAPANESE FUNERALS

Should you meet in the street what seems to be a specially festive procession, you may know that a

funeral is in progress. White is the indication of mourning, and certainly it is less heathenish than black. In the case of the poorer classes the coffin, instead of being laid horizontally on the bier, is placed upright, and is buried in that position. It is nearly square in shape, the body being doubled up when placed in it, with the knees on the chest. But in the funerals of the upper classes the body is always placed horizontally in the coffin.

RELIGION

The two prevailing forms of religion in Japan are known as Shinto and Buddhism. The former has been stated in short as nature worship and reverence for the ancestors of the Emperor or consecrated persons, such as national heroes. The essential quality of Shinto is the spirit of filial piety, the readiness to surrender life for a principle. It is the whole emotional life of the race, the soul of Japan. It has no system of dogmas, no creed, no infallible book, no ideals, no moral code, no promise of heaven, no threat of hell. Shinto is a religion devoid of dogma. Buddhism came with a dogmatic system supplying the need, rivalling the Roman Church in the ornateness of its temple service and in the splendour of its decorative embellishments. It gave new impetus and direction to the æsthetic life of the nation. Many Japanese are believers in both forms of religion.

I do not possess the requisite knowledge to attempt a detailed statement of the doctrines and

principles of Buddhism. Once the State Church of Japan, it was disestablished a few years ago, but still remains a great power in the land. Some people consider that the Japanese are almost without any strong religious instincts. In 1584 the Roman Catholic converts were numbered by hundreds of thousands, but in little more than three decades they were exterminated, and every vestige of the Western religion was swept from the land. Its symbols were held up to public abhorrence, and to prevent its re-entrance the ports of the Empire were closely sealed for 250 years. I am told, however, that this was not a religious war at all, and that the converts were only put to death because they joined in a rebellion, and not on account of their Christianity. In regard to religion, however, as to other matters, I believe that many Japanese have an open mind, and would readily give their adhesion to any form of religious faith they were led to consider superior to their own.

JURISDICTION OVER FOREIGNERS

Until last year the various European nations had their own courts of law in Japan, wherein those of their nationality were tried, and they were not under the jurisdiction of the Japanese; but the marvellous progress made by Japan in the last quarter of a century gave her a claim to admission as one of the great nations of the world. There were great rejoicings to celebrate the coming into force of the new treaties which con-

ferred on the Japanese jurisdiction over foreigners: banquets and entertainments took place, and the towns were gaily decorated.

There is a great difference of opinion on the subject. The majority of the Europeans consider that the abolition of their own courts, and the placing of them entirely under Japanese law, is a premature step, inasmuch as they do not believe there is a sufficient number of trained Japanese judges, magistrates, or lawyers to administer the law properly. They have, I understand, adopted an excellent code of laws, drawn mainly from those of France and Germany. They were unable to adopt English laws because they have not been codified.

The fault I find with the British treaty is that, while placing British subjects absolutely under Japanese law, it does not secure them many rights and privileges which the Japanese freely enjoy in England, but we may hope that eventually similar rights will be conceded in Japan. I am certain that the Japanese will try to administer the laws equitably, but only time will show how far they are able to avoid friction.

POLITICAL

During my short stay in Japan I was very fortunate in meeting politicians and commercial men able to give me reliable and valuable information with regard to political and commercial matters not only in Japan, but also in Korea and China. I have obtained much new light on the political events

which preceded the Chino-Japanese war, and on what happened during the progress of that war and subsequently.

Through the kindness of the British Minister, Sir Ernest Satow, and other friends, I had interviews with the Marquis Ito, Count Okuma, and Viscount Aoki, who have played a most important part in the recent political history of Japan.

MARQUIS ITO

To Marquis Ito is mainly due the credit of the written constitution which Japan has recently adopted, after commissions had been sent out to make close inquiry in regard to the constitutions under which European nations are governed. Thirty years ago Japan was in a state of feudalism under nobles, known as 'Daimios.' A revolution took place; the 'Daimios' were made to surrender their feudal rights, and the whole population now owns allegiance to the Emperor alone.

About ten years ago a very important development took place when, under a somewhat restricted franchise, representative government was initiated by the election of a House of Commons. There is also a House of Peers, composed of hereditary peers, life peers, and selected peers.

From both Houses all direct representatives of religion are expressly excluded, and there is, therefore no question of the removal of bishops and archbishops from the House of Lords confronting Japan. There is no party government as in England, and

no Conservative party as we understand it. Some call themselves ' Liberals,' others ' Progressionists,' but there are few vital differences in the matter of political principles separating them. Party government will, no doubt, gradually arise; but meantime the electors vote for the men who command their confidence, and not merely in a party sense. This, after all, is the natural result of their feudal system, when loyalty to the chief of their clan was the influence which dominated them.

Marquis Ito had a most difficult task imposed upon him—to conclude the treaty of peace at the close of the Chino-Japanese war. Under strong pressure on the part of Russia, France, and Germany, Japan was largely deprived of the fruits of victory. The surrender of the Liao-tung Peninsula was so bitterly resented in Japan that Marquis Ito was driven from power; but the course he pursued was the only one open to him. At the present time he is by far the most powerful politician in Japan, and various political parties are striving to induce him to become their leader.

Marquis Ito possesses ability, shrewdness, and force of character, which make him unquestionably the most powerful statesman in Japan to-day. He is short in stature even for a Japanese.

In our interview he spoke of his fall from political power as the result of his surrender of the Liao-tung Peninsula under the Treaty of Shimonoseki; this, of course, was due to the joint intervention of Russia, France, and Germany, and no fault of his.

Marquis Ito said the Chinese indemnity was first fixed at 200,000,000 taels, or 32,000,000*l.*, and then he got 30,000,000 taels more in consideration of giving up the Liao-tung Peninsula.

Had England only supported Japan, and insisted, as she was asked to do, that as a condition of Japan's evacuation an agreement should be concluded under which all the Powers would bind themselves not to occupy the Liao-tung Peninsula or Port Arthur, the subsequent course of events in the Far East might have been very different indeed.

Marquis Ito assured me that Japan would welcome the co-operation of England and America for the upholding of their mutual interests in China, but that a pious expression of good will was of no use; there must be a definite understanding. He remarked that, in addition to having the strongest fleet in the Far East, Japan could put from 200,000 to 300,000 men in the field, and must therefore be a valuable ally.

With regard to currency, Marquis Ito stated that he was at one time rather inclined to bi-metallism, but that, after spending six months in the study of currency at the Treasury at Washington, he now supports a gold standard.

The Marquis is the most trusted adviser of the Emperor of Japan. He informed me that the Emperor is forty-seven years old, and takes great interest in the affairs of the State.

The present Emperor has renounced Buddhism and is now Shinto. Marquis Ito prefers Protes-

tantism to Roman Catholicism, but he does not mix religion and politics. He said that the constitution he framed gives complete religious liberty, and that his faith is a matter for the individual.

He referred to his visit of four months in 1898 to China. He reached Peking at the time of the fall of the Reform party. He went up the Yang-tsze, but was recalled from Hankow by the Japanese Emperor to form a Cabinet, and so was unable to arrive at such an understanding with China as might have powerfully influenced the course of events in that empire.

COUNT OKUMA

Count Okuma is the leader of the Progressionist party, and a man of strong convictions, who enjoys the confidence of a very large section of his countrymen. He is a fascinating man, with brilliant conversational powers, and from the keen interest he takes in a great variety of subjects reminded me of our Grand Old Man. He might be fairly described as the Gladstone of Japan. He had his leg shattered by a bomb in 1889.

Our interview took place at his house, a short distance out of Tokyo, where he has a lovely Japanese garden. Captain Brinkley accompanied me, and very kindly acted as interpreter. Count Okuma cannot speak a word of English, and, though so well informed in regard to the political affairs of all nations, has never been out of Japan. He referred in the most friendly terms to England, and would be

quite willing also to act in concert with the United States of America. In his opinion, the interests of England, America, and Japan are identical in the Far East, and to co-operate actively must be mutually beneficial. He thought a great opportunity was lost when England and Japan neglected to unite in regard to Port Arthur, and that the present situation is largely the result of that blunder. Count Okuma expressed the opinion that the advance southwards of Russia in China can only be checked by the reorganisation of the Chinese army under British and Japanese officers. He said about sixty Chinese were then studying military science in Japan. He considered the financial position of Japan good. Thirty years ago the Government started with hardly any revenue. They had compensated nobles for destruction of feudal rights, and undertaken great public works, such as railways, posts, telegraphs, schools, public offices, and gaols, and yet, though the yen was worth only 2*s.* now as compared with 4*s.* then, the gold debt was no larger than twenty years ago.

He thought England should have begun the construction of a railway from British Burmah to the Upper Yangtsze years ago, and that it should be extended to Shanghai. He believed that the Japanese would resist to a man the taking of Korea by Russia, as the nation had been associated with Korea for centuries, and it was imperative that it should be preserved as an outlet for the surplus population of Japan.

VISCOUNT AOKI

With Viscount Aoki, who is at present the Minister of Foreign Affairs, I had two interviews of a most interesting and instructive character.

He married a German lady, and is strongly pro-German. He would like to see the Protestant religion of Germany and England spread in Japan, but hopes that neither the Roman Catholic nor the Greek Church will take root there.

Viscount Aoki said that Japan, with a population increasing at the rate of nearly half a million a year, and possessing only a very limited area of cultivable land, must have a suitable colony which should be exclusively Japanese, as they do not intermix readily with other races.

Formosa, which was ceded to Japan at the close of the Chino-Japanese war, had entailed a heavy financial loss on Japan hitherto, but is expected to leave a surplus next year. It is, however, unsuitable in point of climate for Japanese settlers, and the same applies to the Chinese province of Fukien, opposite Formosa, over which the Japanese have asserted priority of right.

Korea, by its proximity to Japan, its suitability in point of climate, fertility of soil, fisheries, and mineral resources, is just what they need for expansion, and on no account can the Japanese allow Russia to dominate or acquire Korea. On strategical grounds Japan must resist any occupation of Korea by Russia; there is also the sentimental interest of

the Japanese in Korea, arising out of the history of their repeated fighting there for centuries past. They conquered Korea three hundred years ago, and afterwards withdrew when they ought to have kept it.

Viscount Aoki expressed the same views as Marquis Ito and Count Okuma as to the importance of concerted action on the part of England, America, and Japan in support of their mutual interests in China.

He was good enough to give me letters of introduction to the Japanese representative in Korea, and also to their ambassador in Peking.

I met other Japanese politicians, including the Director of the Financial Department, who gave me the fullest information as to the financial position of Japan.

A JAPANESE DINNER

One Japanese member of Parliament, Mr. Kotaro Hiraoka, gave a dinner in my honour, at which several other members were present. This was served in Japanese fashion; there were no chairs or tables, or knives and forks. A number of small dishes of various kinds of food were placed in front of each guest on the spotless matting which covered the floor of the room, on which we squatted and endeavoured to convey the food from the dishes to our mouths by means of chopsticks. The drawback to me was that we had neither bread nor vegetables until the rice was brought on at the end of the meal.

Many of the dishes which were supplied to us were unknown to me, but amongst them were cold quails, also several kinds of fish, including trout and eels, prepared in different ways. Geisha girls waited upon us hand and foot, and diligently fanned us.

The liquid portion of the repast was tea and the native liquor 'sake.'

The Geisha girls afterwards played and sang and performed their curious dances. It was altogether a novel and interesting evening. Next day Mr. Hiraoka brought a carriage and drove me round to see the sights of the great city of Tokyo, with its nearly two millions of inhabitants. Before I left he gave me, as a farewell present, a Japanese painting over two hundred years old, accompanied by a certificate in proof that it was genuine.

With regard to European diplomatists in Japan, I had conversations with Sir Ernest Satow and Count von Lyden, the German Ambassador, also with Colonel Buck, the representative of the United States of America, and several men holding high positions in China, who are at present invalided to Japan.

From the information received from these and also from the Japanese I have come to the conclusion that it will be mainly the fault of England if there is not in the future greater co-operation between England, Japan, and the United States of America in respect to their mutual interests in the Far East.

I left for Korea by the s.s. 'Higo-Maru,' which called at Shimonoseki and Nagasaki, in Japan.

KOBE TO NAGASAKI

The boat on which I left Kobe belonged to a Japanese company, and was also officered and manned by Japanese, but I cannot say that they compare favourably with British sailors. The ship was not kept in that condition of cleanliness that characterises British ships, and did not make a pleasant home during the ten days which I spent on board. However, in travelling it is necessary to take the rough with the smooth and make the best of it.

THE INLAND SEA OF JAPAN

We steamed down the celebrated Inland Sea of Japan from Kobe to Shimonoseki. Writer after writer has stated that he could not find words to describe adequately the beautiful scenery of the Inland Sea. There are high hills clothed with luxuriant vegetation to their very tops, picturesque islands splendidly cultivated in terraces right down to the edge of the water, and mountains stretching away in the far distance.

We had one good sunset, with light and shade and variety of colouring, forming an exquisite picture.

Mr. Hiraoka joined the boat at Kobe on his way to Hakata, his place of residence. To my surprise he brought me six bottles of the finest 'sake' made in Japan, also a silk 'kimono' and a beautiful sash. The receipt of these, and of a welcome box of cigars, given by another friend to replenish my exhausted stock, made me feel that I

could hardly regard myself as 'a stranger in a strange land.'

THE BATTLE OF THE BOTTLES

The Inland Sea of Japan is generally smooth, but on this occasion, during the last half of the trip, we were unfortunate enough to be caught in the edge of a typhoon. We were well pitched about, and one freak of the steamer I may describe as the 'battle of the bottles.' The Japanese do not pack bottles in a case, as we do, but tie them together with a band! The 'sake' which I had received was handed to me in this form, and deposited on the floor of my cabin. During the storm, however, bottle after bottle broke loose, and a battle between the bottles on the floor of the cabin finally took place, at a moment when my condition was such that I would not have moved a finger to save a hundred bottles. My teetotal friends will, therefore, be able to rejoice that, at any rate, the storm saved me from the danger of becoming addicted to this particular kind of liquor. The longest night passes at last, and this, indeed, appeared a long one. After a storm comes a calm, and the next morning we were peacefully gliding over a perfectly calm sea through the Straits of Shimonoseki. Shimonoseki is the place where Li-Hung-Chang and Marquis Ito, the representatives of China and Japan, met and arranged the treaty which concluded the Chino-Japanese war in 1894–5. The Straits of Shimonoseki are at some points

little more than half a mile wide, and as it is the only deep-water inlet at the western end of the Inland Sea of Japan, very strong forts line the hills on either side. The Japanese consider that it would be absolutely impossible for an enemy to force the passage.

BY RAILWAY TO NAGASAKI

From Shimonoseki to Nagasaki the steamer route is more exposed, passing round the western coast of the Island of Kiushiu. At Shimonoseki I learnt that the effect of the typhoon was being felt severely outside. I decided to cross to Nagasaki by railway both to escape the storm and to enable me to see something of the interior of the Island of Kiushiu. A further inducement to do this was the knowledge that my friend, Mr. Hiroaka, would travel for three hours by the same train. He took me off the steamer on his own steam-launch, and brought a huge block of ice with which to cool our supply of Hirano water; he also telegraphed to a station two hours ahead ordering a supply of freshly cooked rice. He was evidently an influential man in these parts, for at Moji, the port just opposite Shimonoseki, where we took the train, there was a crowd of residents to see him off, and also at Hakata to welcome him home after an absence of three months. Most particular instructions were given to the conductor of the train to take care to land me safely at Nagasaki and to look after me on the journey. This was more necessary than might

appear, as it was a cross-country route, not a single soul could speak a word of English, and I was unable to speak a word of Japanese. The railway route lay through a beautifully wooded country, with wide fertile plains covered with rice-fields and high hills in the distance. The rice is so irrigated that it is literally growing in water, and hundreds of people were wading up to their knees transplanting rice. They wore huge mushroom-shaped hats, almost like umbrellas, to shelter them from the sun. The railway track was lined with palisades which had been burnt to prevent decay. We passed large steelworks which the Imperial Government of Japan are erecting with the object of producing pig iron and steel plates for themselves. They are situated near a coal-field, but having regard to the very inferior quality of most of the coal and the scanty supply of iron ore to be met with in Japan, there seems every chance that they will be able to import from England more cheaply than they can produce it themselves.

The shipment of coal is carried on at Moji and several other ports along the coast. I was told that the rate of railway carriage for conveying coal thirty miles down to the port of shipment is only 1*s.* 4*d.* per ton.

The Japanese are great tea-drinkers; they use green tea, which they consider more stimulating. An earthenware teapot containing freshly made tea can be had at most of the stations for three sens—say, three farthings.

NAGASAKI

I arrived at Nagasaki shortly after midnight in a tremendous downpour of tropical rain and the blast of the typhoon. It was all that the 'jinricksha' man could do to battle with the storm, and get me from the station to the hotel in three-quarters of an hour instead of twenty minutes. The harbour of Nagasaki, one of the prettiest in the East, is a narrow inlet about three miles in length, indented by numerous bays and surrounded by wooded hills. It is thoroughly sheltered, and affords anchorage for ships of all classes. Nagasaki is noted for a delicious kind of jelly made from seaweed. The fish market shows perhaps the greatest variety of fish in the world, some two or three hundred different kinds being sold there.

WORKS AND MINES

Here as elsewhere the English residents showed me every kindness and hospitality. Mr. Ringer, of Messrs. Holme, Ringer, & Co., sent me in his steam-launch to visit the large shipbuilding yard, the Marine Engine Building Works, the Boiler Works and Foundry of the Mitsubishi Company, which lie across the bay from Nagasaki. The same company also own the Takashima Coal-mines. The shafts are sunk on two islands close to Nagasaki, and the coal is worked from under the sea. It is far and away the best quality of coal in Japan, and is used by the 'Empress' boats. The price is about nine dollars

per ton, but the output is becoming limited. I was received with great courtesy at the works and shown everything. They have a well-ventilated foundry, where they make iron castings—not steel—also excellent fitting-shops, pattern-shops, boiler-shops, forging and blacksmiths' shops. I was glad to find that they use 'Redcar' pig iron from the Middlesbrough district very largely, and also Scotch iron. They have tried pig iron from China, but find the quality very inferior. They are driving machines with electric motors, and practically the whole of the machinery employed has been supplied from Great Britain. They buy all the steel castings, the steel and iron plates, girders, and Siemens steel for boilers from England and Scotland. H.M. cruiser 'Bonaventure,' which ran on a rock off the Korean coast recently and knocked a hole in her bottom, had just come out of the graving dock after repairs. Opposite their shipbuilding yard was a 6,000 tons steamer which they had recently launched. They admitted that the cost of building this vessel had proved to be much more than they could have bought her for in England, but they are hoping to do better in future.

JAPANESE WORKMEN

I had a long talk with Mr. Crow, a Scotchman, who is the manager of the shipbuilding yard, and from him I learnt that it takes four Japanese to do as much work as one Britisher. Though their wages vary from only 1*s.* to 2*s.* per day

of nine hours, it is probable the wages cost of building a ship is as great as in England. I found that the company was induced to lay down these works only on the Japanese Government's undertaking to grant them an annual subsidy out of the national exchequer. The fact of its being necessary to offer a subsidy of this description to bolster up the business shows that, at any rate at present, they are well aware they have no chance of competing with us on fair and equal terms. It shows a wonderful spirit of courage and enterprise on their part to make such an attempt to produce what they require for themselves. Possibly when their workmen acquire greater skill and experience they will attain results which will bring them into the category of serious competitors with us, at any rate in their own market. It therefore behoves us to keep our works at home thoroughly up to date in every respect. The number of men employed at present by the Mitsubishi Company at their works in Nagasaki is about 3,000.

BRITISH COMMERCIAL INTERESTS

British commercial men out in Japan think that their interests have not been by any means so fully safeguarded as they might have been in connection with the new treaty which has recently been concluded. For example, a new duty of 2*s.* per ton has been placed upon English coal without any determined effort on the part of the British

Representative to prevent it. Notwithstanding this, and also the fact that freight varies from about 24*s.* to 30*s.* a ton, large quantities of Welsh coal are at the present time on their way to Nagasaki.

ISLAND OF TSUSHIMA

The s.s. 'Higo-Maru,' which I left at Shimonoseki, should have arrived at Nagasaki at eight o'clock the following morning, but owing to the stormy weather she did not come in until 6 P.M. We left Nagasaki early in the morning, and I am now on my way to Fusan, the first port of call in Korea. We touched on the way at the Island of Tsushima, which belongs to Japan. The bay in which we anchored is surrounded by high hills clothed with timber from bottom to top. On the way to Tsushima the boat had rolled very much, and we were all glad to go ashore and feel that we were once more on *terra firma*. The islanders showed much more interest in us as foreigners than was shown at any place in Japan proper. A crowd of from twenty to thirty men, women, and children followed us for miles, and everybody in the streets seemed highly amused with what I presume they considered our grotesque appearance. We had a lovely walk into the country on a fairly good road, alongside which a clear rushing stream flowed. The banks on either side were clothed with magnificent groves of bamboos.

I left Tsushima after a stay of only a few hours, and so ended my all too short visit to Japan.

KOREA

We sighted the coast of Korea early on Tuesday morning, August 15, and soon anchored in the lovely bay of Fusan, which is encircled by high bare green rock-strewn hills, which were capped with mist and reminded me of many hills both in England and Scotland. The town of Fusan is divided into two quarters, Japanese and Korean. Behind the Japanese quarter rises a large wood of pine trees, which adds greatly to the picturesqueness of the bay. On landing I found the Customs in charge of a Frenchman and a German harbour-master. An Italian official at the Customs, with the most friendly feelings towards everything English, became my guide, and assisted me in despatching telegrams, which is not an altogether easy process at a Korean telegraph office.

FIRST VISIT TO A MISSIONARY STATION IN THE FAR EAST

I went with a lady missionary to visit the missionary station at Fusan. We had half an hour's walk to reach it, uphill, in a warm atmosphere. We found the missionary nursing a baby, his wife being ill. He was much exercised in his mind about his domestic affairs, having been robbed of money on two preceding days by his Korean servants.

We saw two other lady missionaries there. When I suggested that as our time was limited, and

as I was very anxious to get reliable information from those who view matters from different standpoints, the missionary might perhaps stroll back with us to the landing-place and give me further information, he said he was sorry, but the situation of his domestic affairs prevented. For the life of me I could not understand why one of the two lady missionaries should not have taken the baby, and the other been placed for half an hour on watch and guard against robbers.

DANGEROUS COASTS

Our steamer route, especially between Fusan and Mokpo, was a very dangerous one. There were scores of islands, and many sharp jagged rocks studded the surface of the sea, with possibly many more similar rocks jutting up nearly to the surface of the water, but still unseen. Fortunately, the weather was extremely fine and there was no fog, otherwise I should not have felt particularly safe. I certainly should not care to voyage along the coast of Korea in the winter time. This is where H.M. cruiser 'Bonaventure' recently struck on a rock. However, 'all's well that ends well,' and nothing in the shape of an accident befell us.

THE KOREAN PENINSULA

The Korean Peninsula stands in the unfortunate geographical position of being midway between China and Japan, and has been, like Issachar, the strong ass crouching between two

burdens. Both countries have for generations sought to claim the allegiance of Korea. They have both many times invaded it, and from time to time the influence of first one and then the other has been predominant. The King of Korea adopted the title of 'Emperor' after the close of the Chino-Japanese war, which nominally secured its independence. It covers an area estimated at from 85,000 to 100,000 square miles. As in the case of Manchuria, we are told again and again that Korea is a barren and worthless country, but from the most reliable authorities I am in a position to state that the climate is good and the soil fertile, capable of growing the finest timber and every fruit grown in England, with the addition of many of a tropical character.

It is estimated that not more than one-half of the cultivable land is being farmed.

FISHERIES

The fisheries of Korea are most valuable; unfortunately the natives do not reap for themselves the whole advantage of these, as they have foolishly allowed the Japanese fishing rights within the three miles limit. With regard also to whaling, Russia has succeeded in obtaining a concession of land at three Korean ports for the purpose of salting the whales; the greater number of these are not oil-producing, but after being salted are taken to Japan and sold for food there.

A whale of average size is stated to be worth

about 2,000 dollars. The importance of this concession to Russia will be seen when I state that one whaling-ship caught fifteen whales in fourteen days last season. Russia ostensibly holds these pieces of land on a twelve years' lease, and it is stipulated that they are still to remain under Korean jurisdiction. Only time will disclose whether this move on her part does not mean that she will gradually take possession of the three ports and use them as bases for extending her influence in Korea.

KOREAN GOLD-FIELDS

I met on board the steamer a Mr. Hunt, an American, who has got a concession from the Emperor of Korea for the working of gold over an area of 1,000 square miles. He has already more than 1,300 men at work, and is quite confident of the success of his undertaking.

The Germans have also secured a concession of 270 square miles, which they are prospecting. England appears likely to be almost left out in the cold, as the only concession obtained by the British is that secured by Mr. Pritchard Morgan. In addition to gold, experts say that coal, iron, lead, and silver may be found in Korea.

RAILWAYS

The Koreans realise the importance of having the country opened up by railways, but they have no money with which to construct them. They have been induced to give the Japanese the right to build

a railway from Chemulpo to Seoul, which is now under construction; also from Seoul to Fusan—350 miles—but, owing to the present financial condition of Japan, the necessary capital is not forthcoming to enable the latter to be proceeded with. The Germans are trying to get a concession for a railway from Seoul to Gensan, which the Japanese are opposing. France also had a concession from Seoul to Wigu, which has lapsed owing to their not having begun the construction of the line within the specified time. France has, however, in connection with the cancelled contract, obtained a written assurance from the Korean Government that whenever the railway is built French engineers will be employed, and that the whole of the railway material and rolling stock shall be manufactured in France, no matter what may be the nationality of the country constructing the railway.

Similar stipulations are inserted in the railway concessions obtained in China by Russia, France, and Germany. If this sort of thing is to go on unchecked, I wish to know where, in the future, the markets for the products of British labour will be found. Seeing that England depends largely on her exports for prosperity, I ask whether, owing to the supineness of British capitalists or of the British Government, British producers are to have no share in supplying Korea with a system of railways necessary to open up and develop the country. There is no completed railway whatever in existence. I inspected the one which is in course of construc-

tion from Chemulpo to Seoul; this will be, when opened, the first railway that Korea has ever had.

THE EMPEROR AND THE GOVERNMENT

Mr. Jordan spoke of the Emperor as taking a keen personal interest in everything that affects Korea. He is an amiable man, possessed of some ability, but his hands are greatly weakened in dealing with Korean affairs by the rascality and rapacity of the nobles and the official classes.

He is said to be a spendthrift, and though taking one-tenth of the national revenue—viz. 600,000 dollars—for his own personal use, he is in a very impecunious condition. It is believed that those around him fleece him right and left.

The population of this by no means insignificant empire numbers only from eight to ten millions.

Korea has an historical antiquity contemporaneous with that of Thebes and Babylon, but possesses no ruins; and though boasting a separate, if not an independent, existence for centuries, is devoid of all external signs of strength. Foreigners have been excluded until recently, though there is little or no anti-foreign feeling. They have no representative government whatever, no House of Lords or House of Commons. There are eight Ministers of State—viz. the Prime Minister, the Ministers of Finance, Foreign Affairs, War, Education and Law, Imperial Household, Agriculture and Commerce, and Public Works. These are appointed

by the Emperor and continue in office at his pleasure. There is also a Council of State of about fifteen members, to whom matters of legislation are supposed to be submitted for debate, but practically this is, at the present time, more 'honoured in the breach than in the observance.'

I had the opportunity of meeting the men most likely to understand the Korean political situation, and they hold the opinion that there is little chance of its regeneration except by the intervention of some foreign Power. At the present moment the Reactionaries are in power, and the Progressive leaders are in exile.

ATTITUDE OF RUSSIA AND JAPAN

There is little doubt that the eyes of Russia, as well as those of Japan, are turned towards Korea, the former being desirous of rounding off her territory north of the Gulf of Pechili by its absorption; while, on the other hand, Japan, with a population increasing at the rate of nearly half a million a year, would find Korea, enjoying as it does a very similar climate to its own, the most suitable opening for expansion, which must come in some direction or other. It is true that Russia last year withdrew, by arrangement with Japan, the financial adviser and the military instructors she had at the Korean Court, and the Russo-Chinese Bank was closed; but I am inclined to think this rather a pause on the part of Russia than an actual relinquishment of her intention ultimately to absorb Korea.

PORT HAMILTON

Port Hamilton, which is on a group of islands on the southern coast of Korea, was occupied by the British fleet in 1885, and England only withdrew on Russia undertaking that she would not occupy Korean territory under any circumstances whatsoever. Knowing as we do the facility with which Russia ignores assurances of this nature, I do not attach much importance to this so-called guarantee on her part.

TRADE

The countries which do the largest trade with Korea are Japan and England. There are only one or two English commercial firms established in the country, and these mainly represent steamship lines. Curiously, the English trade with Korea has been almost exclusively carried on up to the present time by Chinese. There are 6,000 in the country who are under the protection of the British Government. It is anticipated that the treaty between China and Korea, placing the Chinese under the jurisdiction of their own Government, the same as Europeans, will be speedily signed. The exports of England to Korea are mainly Manchester cotton goods, and we are holding our own well in the competition for orders with the Japanese, notwithstanding the supposed advantage that they have from cheap labour.

The Koreans, like the Japanese, are commercially

unreliable and are naturally lazy. Probably to a certain extent this is the result of the conditions under which they live, for I am told that the provincial officials, known as 'Yanghans,' extort taxes at their own sweet will and pleasure, and in the majority of cases for their own personal enrichment.

REVENUE

The total revenue of the Korean Government is about six million yen, and it is estimated that at least three times the amount that is paid into the Exchequer is extorted from the people by the local officials. This condition of affairs deprives the people of any incentive to industry, for if they work hard and save a little money, in many cases it only means that they have been accumulating it for the benefit of the local official.

CURRENCY

The currency of Korea is in a very debased condition. The Government have issued, wholesale, nickel pieces at five sens each, which have cost less than one sen, and at the present time 131 nickel sens are only equivalent to one Japanese yen. To a certain extent, however, Japanese paper and silver are used.

MONEY-LENDING

The money-lending arrangements also greatly hinder the prosperity of the Korean people. The

lowest rate of interest paid for borrowed money is 12 per cent. per annum, whilst 60 per cent. is a usual rate, and 120 per cent. frequent. The law does not allow any claim beyond double the loan, therefore the lender at the end of ten months threatens to enforce payment, and any failure to pay means floggings, stocks, and imprisonment. The borrower, as a rule, agrees that the interest and principal shall be added together and constituted a fresh loan, and if he goes on for twenty months the amount owing by the luckless debtor is four times the amount which he originally borrowed. The local magistrates who administer the law have full power, and so the money-lender needs to secure their favour by a substantial gift, while the debtor probably counterworks on the same lines. I do not forget that we have in England a class of money-lenders almost as rapacious as those of Korea, but stringent legislation is proposed to deal with the evil. Of course at home it prevails only to a small extent, while in Korea it is universal.

RELIGION

The Rev. F. Jones, of Chemulpo, gave me the following statement as to the religion of the Koreans:

'Confucianism is the State religion of Korea. It has neither priesthood nor supernaturalism, but a good moral code with cult of worship. They rely entirely on self-effort, and do not look for divine assistance.

'They have no temples in the ordinary sense, but Tablet Houses, or Shrines, or Halls of Learning. The *literati* offer sacrifice twice a year to Confucius, the saints of Confucianism, and local celebrities. The offerings consist of green fruit and liquor, which are afterwards enjoyed by the celebrants.

'Buddhism also exists in a state of decay and is not widespread. Fetishism is universal. Local spirits which frequent the earth, air, and water (corresponding somewhat to the Fengshui of China), are propitiated by offerings of green fruit, dogs, pigs, and liquors, which are always consumed by the worshippers. These celebrations take place in cases where sickness or misfortune falls upon a household, and often at the end of a harvest.' Possibly they are based to some extent upon the same idea as our harvest homes.

EDUCATION

The Koreans are a very badly educated people. They have no State schools, and a decision on the part of the Government to build 330 Government schools scattered over the country has not been carried out to any extent. So far as there is any education, it is at present being given privately. Four good schools have been established by the Korean Government, in which the teaching of English, French, German, and Russian is the special feature.

ANIMALS

The tiger is the king of animals in Korea, while bears, leopards, wild boars, sables, ermine, otter, hares, and foxes, also several kinds of deer, are found in various parts of the country. Pheasants, every variety of wildfowl, including geese, swans, ducks, teal, water-hen, plover, and snipe, also bustards, cranes, and herons, pink and white ibis, and eagles, are plentiful. Korea is therefore a promising recreation-ground for the sportsman.

RACE

The Koreans belong unmistakably to the Mongolian stock, being a sort of intermediate type between the Mongolian Tartar and the Japanese. Nearly the whole of the Koreans have jet-black hair and dark eyes. As individuals, they possess many attractive characteristics. The upper classes are polite and friendly to foreigners, priding themselves on their correct deportment, while the working people are generally good-tempered, cheerful, and talkative, though very excitable.

KOREAN HABITS AND DRESS

The chief vice of the Koreans is over-indulgence in drink. They manufacture fermented liquor from rice and barley; there is little opium-smoking.

The favourite method of disposing of criminals sentenced to death is to behead them, and in order to impress the populace both the head and the body lie

exposed for three days. In consideration, however, of the objections raised by foreign residents, the authorities have removed the place of execution some distance outside the city walls.

The graveyards of the Koreans are different from any others I have ever seen; they are here, there, and everywhere. Some rich men have one all to themselves. Usually they are on the hillsides, which are terraced, and the graves are marked by mounds, resembling in the distance hay pikes of freshly cut grass.

Unmarried women wear their hair parted in the middle, and in a long plait down their backs. The men have their hair drawn up in a top-knot.

Officials wear on their heads, first, a band composed of a mixture of human and horse hair; secondly, an official cap, made of horse-tail hair, forming what looks like a sort of thin gauze; thirdly comes the regular black dress hat, which is exactly like the national hat worn by Welsh women. They have besides triangular-shaped glazed paper hats to put over their other hats when it rains.

They wear baggy white trousers, tied in at the knees and ankles, with leggings, heavily padded socks, and white leather shoes, also a white flowing robe like the kimono of Japan, except that it has sleeves and is tied under the right arm instead of by a sash. They often wear a second outer robe of white, with the addition of a blue silk girdle.

The Emperor's robes are of scarlet—the royal colour. Some officials also wear robes of this colour,

and others blue or yellow; but the Ministers and chief notables are usually dressed in blue or purple. Most of the garments are of silk. Young men of high rank often wear most charming robes of pink or light blue.

The women of Korea are the drudges, while the men are the lords of creation; in many cases the women work hard and the men do nothing. If one of these hard-working women were asked what her husband was doing, the expression she would use is that 'he is sitting upon his heels.' The women of the upper classes are rarely seen; they generally dress in white and have a peculiar arrangement by which the short bodice covers the shoulders, but leaves the breasts entirely exposed, while voluminous petticoats, very full at the hips, all but conceal the coarse white or brown trousers below. They wear the same kind of boots as the men, but their stockings are not padded. The women of a certain rank wear a sort of mantle with sleeves which are not used. This is suspended from a hood which covers the head, and they close up the front with their hand to shield themselves from the gaze of passers-by. The favourite colour is green, and these women form quite a picturesque addition to a street crowd as they glide about amongst the men, who, except officials, are clad entirely in white. Their hair is black, and is wound in a big coil round the temples, and ornamented with large silver coins.

AMUSEMENTS

With regard to amusements, kite-flying and kite-fighting are most in favour. The fighting consists in trying to draw one kite across another when they are high in the air, and thus to sever the string of the rival. The Koreans are also the most accomplished stone-throwers in the world; the contests are conducted with such savagery that loss of life frequently results.

EXPEDITION TO THE KOREAN CAPITAL

On arriving at Chemulpo I found that unless I proceeded to Chefoo by the steamer in which I arrived, I should not be able to get another boat for a fortnight. As I was determined, if possible, to visit Seoul, and could not afford to be delayed so long, I decided to make the expedition up to that city in the twenty-four hours at my disposal. I had telegraphed to the Consul-General, Mr. Jordan, and he very kindly had a chair and bearers waiting ready for me on landing. The chair is fixed at the centre of two long poles and is carried by four men at once —I had eight men, so that they might take turn and turn about. I might have gone up the river by boat, but the boat had left an hour before my arrival, and the railway in course of construction was not yet available. I preferred, however, to be taken in the old-fashioned manner. Unfortunately there had been heavy rains, and as there are no macadamised roads, but only tracks across the country, the

bearers were often ankle-deep in mud. The plains which we had to cross, on which rice is grown, were also inundated, and I was often carried for a hundred yards together, with the water up to the men's waists. This they enjoyed thoroughly—laughing and joking all the time. We had also to be ferried across three rivers in the course of the twenty-six miles traversed. The weather was perfect, and after the heavy rain the strong perfume of flowering shrubs was exquisite; the birds were singing gaily. Crowds of men, women, and children were squatting about in every village through which we passed, many of them smoking long pipes, and numerous groups were playing games, this too at an hour of the day when one would naturally expect them to be at work.

GENERAL SCENERY

The land in the valleys has a rich alluvial soil and is very fertile, but the bare hills with reddish-coloured earth exposed here and there on their slopes appeared useless from an agricultural standpoint. The Koreans have been prodigal in denuding the country of timber, but pine-trees which have re-sown themselves are springing up everywhere. The roadway through the villages was decidedly deeper in mud than in the open country—no effort being made to clear it away. Korean houses are thatched with straw, and have walls composed largely of mud. They look picturesque in the distance, especially when nestling amid a cluster of big trees.

They have no mills in Korea for grinding their grain, but they place it in large stone or wooden basins and work over a lever a long piece of wood with an arm attached. With this they crush the grain by pounding it. We met a good many pack-bulls on the way, and occasionally a small Korean pony. Rice and Indian corn are the crops mainly grown between Chemulpo and Seoul.

Some of my bearers had the most ragged white garments that I ever saw. They really prefer to wear as little clothing as possible. On their feet they wore sandals woven of straw, replacing them frequently with new ones, which they could purchase at every hamlet we passed. Instead of stockings they bound long pieces of linen round their feet.

They are evidently not very fond of applying soap and water to their children, as the condition of the multitude of naked little children whom I saw showed.

When my bearers carried me through the water they took off their scanty garments and tied them round their necks, and then raised my chair shoulder high. One man, holding his clothes above his head, walked in advance, in order to discover, if possible, whether there were any big holes in front of us.

SEOUL

We approached Seoul in brilliant sunshine, and I was able to get a very fair idea of the city

and the surrounding country. The mountains on two sides are precipitous and rocky, with splendidly broken outlines. The valley in which Seoul is situated is well timbered, which adds much to the beauty of its appearance.

As we passed through the portion of the city outside the walls, the most prominent object was a curious gateway, which, together with the ancient loopholed walls to the right and left of it, looked extremely picturesque.

I arrived at a quarter to six, the journey having occupied eight and a quarter hours. Within five minutes I began half an hour's interview with Dr. Morrison, the *Times* correspondent at Pekin. Mr. Jordan and I then strolled through the main streets of Seoul, which were thronged with possibly the most picturesque and gaily dressed people in the world, except the Burmese. The Koreans display more taste in their attire than the Burmese, and though the colours of their garments are not so brilliant, the general effect of the white robes of the men and the green mantles of the women is very pleasing. We went to two or three points from which, in the bright evening sunlight, we had perfect views over the city and surrounding country.

We discussed, as we walked along, various matters on which I desired to have information. I left for Chemulpo at a quarter to ten, having thus remained only four hours in the most interesting city of Seoul, but having none the less, thanks to Mr. Jordan, seen the main sights.

ELECTRIC TRAMWAY

I was much surprised to find an electric tramway at work in Seoul; it had been opened only a few weeks. One day a child was killed, whereupon a crowd of Koreans stormed the electric cars, drove off the conductor and attendants, overturned the cars, and burnt them on the spot. It was only after the feeling thus aroused had died down that the Company ventured to start running the cars again.

To show how good the climate is, I may say that Mr. Jordan told me he grew strawberries, cherries, pears, plums, and other English fruit and vegetables at Seoul just as well as at home.

FOREIGN LEGATIONS

It is a significant fact that whilst the Russians and the French have no trade interests whatever in Korea, yet the former have a most palatial Legation, and also an emissary living in great style, with Cossacks in connection with his household. He is not known to have any definite position, but occupies himself in fomenting difficulties.

The French have just completed the erection of a splendid Legation at a cost of 8,000*l.*, though they have no interest in the country except their Roman Catholic Missions. They have a French cathedral in Seoul, and a bishop, and thirty priests working throughout the country with 30,000 converts.

Japan has also an excellent Legation in Seoul, but this is not surprising when we have regard to the fact that 15,000 of its people are settled in that country, and that the association of Japan with Korea has existed through many centuries.

The Japanese have a system of telegraph lines established in Korea, and 800 troops divided among the various places where any considerable number of their people are settled. It is only natural that Japan should have the necessary force on the spot to safeguard her interests.

The staple products of Korea are rice and beans, and enormous quantities of these are sent to Japan —indeed, she takes 90 per cent. of the exports of Korea.

England has a comfortable but, comparatively speaking, modest Legation. In Mr. Jordan we have a man of marked ability, who looks vigilantly and carefully after our interests, though he receives only half the salary that is paid by other Governments to their representatives.

THE RETURN JOURNEY

For the return journey I engaged twelve bearers. Japanese lanterns were carried before and behind, and with the light given by the moon we were able to get along very well so far as the first part of the journey was concerned. Just after starting we arrived at the city gates, which were already closed. The gate-keepers refused to open them without a written order. Mr. Jordan, who had accompanied

me thus far, succeeded in overcoming the difficulty. We then proceeded rapidly along a fairly well made road to the river three miles away, which we crossed by a ferry-boat. After traversing a long stretch of sand, we reached a second river, which had also to be passed in a ferry. Then the road became a broken track, the moon disappeared, and we were left to be guided only by Japanese lanterns, which a shower of rain or a little wind would have extinguished, leaving us hopelessly stranded. Fortunately, the night was still and fine, and we reached the flooded rice-fields without much delay. Then our difficulties began. Two of the men with the Japanese lanterns waded in the water in advance of the bearers to try and prevent our falling into deep holes. Amidst a roar of laughter one of them disappeared from view, extinguishing his lantern, but he came to the top all right and swam into shallower water. It was a case of slow and sure, and the few hundred yards that we thus traversed occupied considerable time. We came to the third river only to find that there was no ferry-boat (known there as a 'sampan') on our side. We all called out together at the top of our voices to try to attract the attention of some one on the other shore, but without success. Further progress would have been impossible had it not been that one of our bearers was an expert swimmer. He dived into the stream without hesitation, and swam across at a most astonishing pace, roused the sleepers in the sampan, and very soon it was brought across and relieved us from our difficulties. When we

reached the halfway house the men all wanted 'chow' (food). This chow had to be prepared in their own particular way, and it was only after more than an hour's delay and by dint of the strongest possible pressure that I induced them to move on again. This was urgently necessary, as my steamer was timed to leave at nine o'clock that morning. We arrived without further incident at Chemulpo at a quarter to eight, and a comfortable English breakfast at the Vice-Consul's was most welcome after the long night's journey. After breakfast I went on board, and was soon on my way to Chefoo, the first port of call in China. I arrived there as described on page 1.

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